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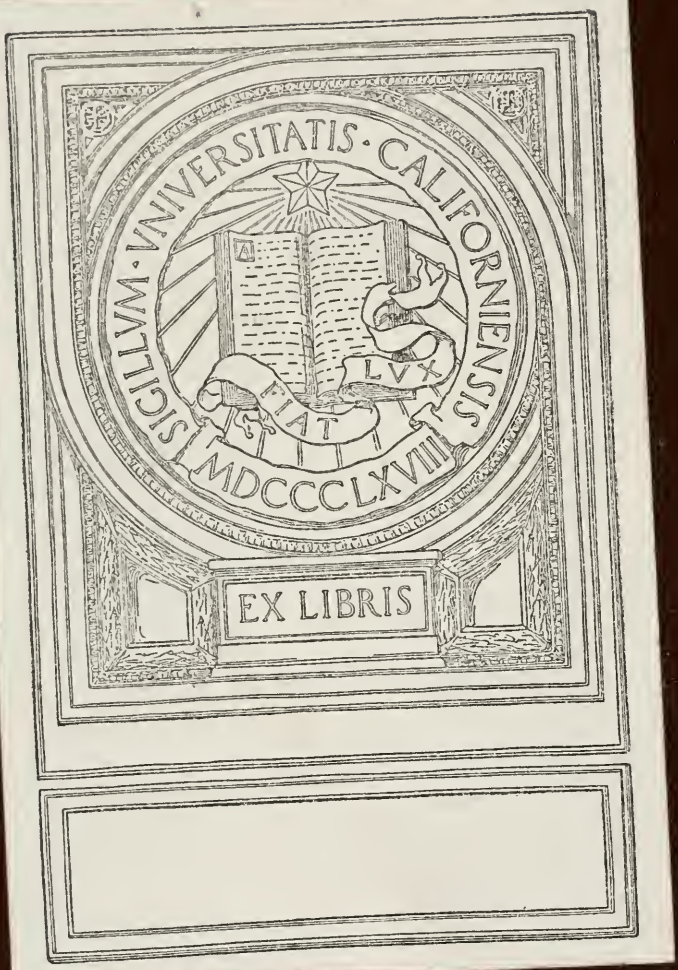
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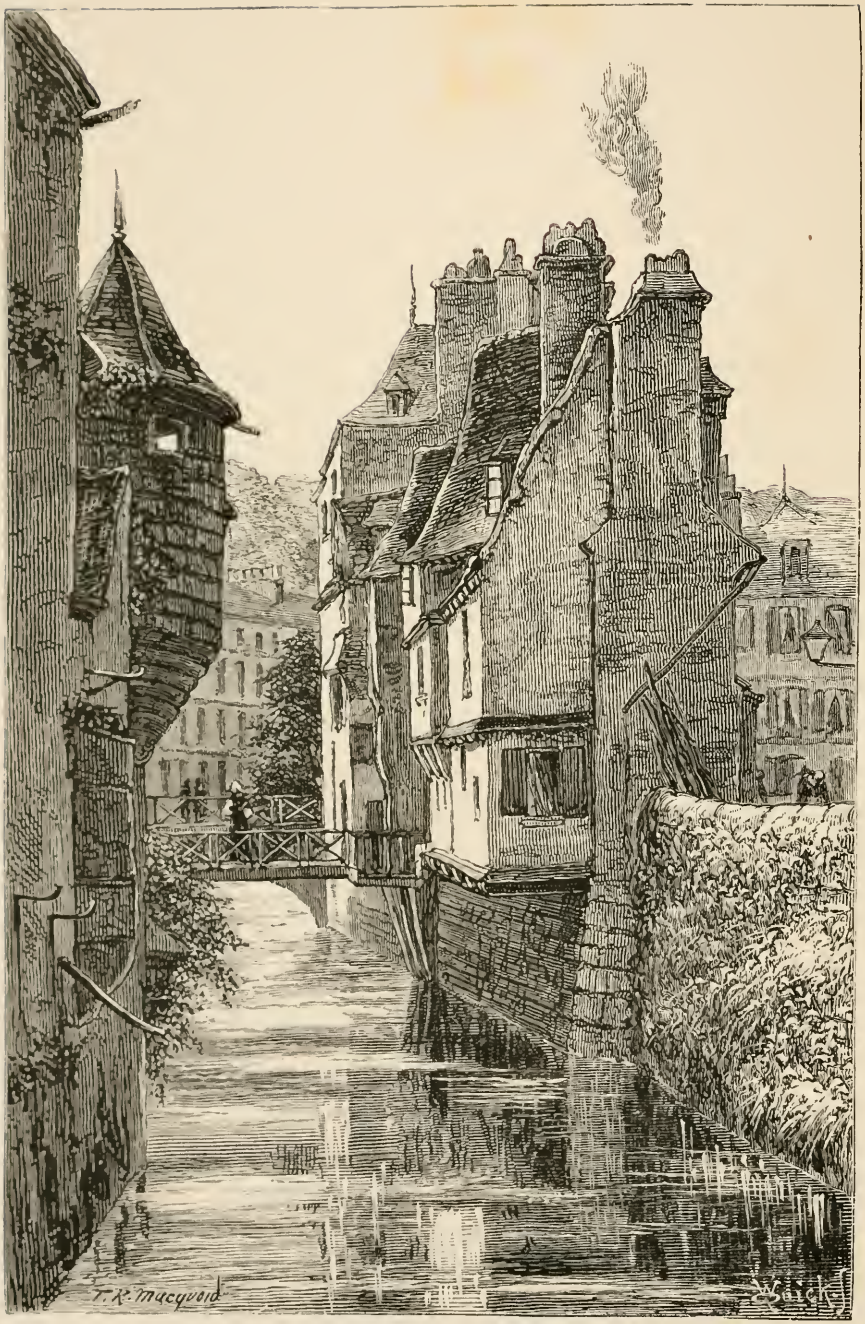

OLD HOUSES, QUIMPER.

THROUGH BRITTANY

By KATHARINE S. MACQUOID

AUTHOR OF "THROUGH NORMANDY"

ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS R. MACQUOID

SOUTH BRITTANY

London

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PICCADILLY

TO

CUTHBERT E. PEEK, Esq.

Làr d'in, anaout a rez ar vrò
Lec'h, war ar garrek, sao derò;
Lec'h 'kân ar barz war dreuz he zôr,
Ha war ann aod e trouz ar môr?

Ja, ar vrò-ze eo Breiz-Izell;—
War ar hed pa daolan eur zell,
En neb lec'h na welan hini,
A c'houlen ken braz meuleudi.

LUZEL.

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LIST OF DISTANCES.

	English Miles.	Kilomètres.
Paris to Chartres	55	88
Chartres to Le Mans	60	123
Le Mans to Angers	60	97
Angers to Nantes	55	88
Nantes to St. Nazaire	40	64
St. Nazaire to Guérande	12	19
Guérande to Le Croisic	8	13
St. Nazaire to Redon	41	67
Redon to Vannes	33	54
Vannes to Elven	7	11
Vannes to St. Gildas	18½	30
Vannes to Zarzeau	15	24
Vannes to Ploermel *viâ* Malestroit	36	58
Ploermel to Josselin	7½	12
Josselin to Vannes *viâ* St. Jean Brévelay	26	42
Vannes to Auray	12	19
Auray to Carnac	8	13
Auray to Pontivy	34	55
Pontivy to St. Nicholas	9½	15
St. Nicholas to St. Nicodème	3	5

	English Miles.	Kilo-mètres.
St. Nicodème to Baud	7	11
Baud to Hennebont	12½	20
Hennebont to Quimperlé	18	29
Quimperlé to Pont Aven	10	16
Pont Aven to Concarneau	8¾	14
Quimperlé to Le Faouët	13	21
Le Faouët to Kernascléden	10	16
Quimperlé to Quimper	28	45
Quimper to Pont l'Abbé	11½	18
Quimper to Penmarc'h	18½	30
Quimper to Pont Croix	23½	38
Pont Croix to Audierne	4	6
Audierne to La Pointe du Raz	9½	15
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INDEX FOR TRAVELLERS IN SOUTH BRITTANY.

IT is always more prudent to write and order rooms a day or two beforehand. Except in a few towns, the charge for a bedroom is two francs a night. In some towns the charge is one franc per bed. A bottle of vin ordinaire is almost always included in the dinner charge. In South Brittany the best places to stop at and make excursions from are—Vannes, Auray, Carnac, Quimperlé, Quimper, Pont Aven, and Douarnenez. Small carriages with one horse can be hired readily at the charge of ten francs per day, with pourboire; but a bargain should always be made. A distance of eight kilomètres almost equals five English miles. The high roads are excellent, but by-roads in wet weather are sometimes very bad. K. stands for kilomètres, f. for francs, c. for centimes. The railway fares seem to be so variable, that those stated can only be taken as an average calculation.

NANTES (Loire Inférieure), page 25.

Railway omnibus, 60c.; town omnibus, 20c. Buffet at station.

Hôtel de France, Place Graslin, has a café and excellent restaurant; table d'hôte breakfast, 3f.; dinner, 4f.

Hôtel de Bretagne, Place du Port Communeau.

Theatres—

Grand Théâtre, Place Graslin.

Théâtre de la Renaissance, Place de Brancas.

Post Office, Rue du Chapeau Rouge, near Rue Boileau.

Telegraph, 1, Rue St. Julien, near Place Royale.

Money changer, Monsieur Pabet, 3, Place Royale.

Bookseller, Madame Veloppé, 1, Quai de la Fosse.

Baths at—

Hôtel de France.

Floating Baths, Quai Duguay Trouin and Quai Turenne, &c.

Rail to Clisson, one hour, 1st class, 2f. 50c.; 2nd class, 2f.; 3rd class, 1f. 50c.

Rail to St. Nazaire about two hours, 1st class, 5f. 50c.; 2nd class, 4f.; 3rd class, 3f. 25c.

Nantes time is seventeen minutes slower than Paris time, but the trains start by Paris time.

Diligences to Pornic start from 2 and 6 Quai Turenne.

Diligence to Blain starts from 1, Rue Talensac.

Diligence to Chateaubriand starts from Rue de l'Erdre.

Steamers to Bordeaux twice a week.

Steamer to Angers, daily, at 7 A.M., Quai Maillard.

Steamers to St. Nazaire and Paimbœuf twice a day; from Quai de la Fosse, 7 A.M., 3 P.M.

Steamer to Nort Quai Ceineray, daily, 7 A.M.

ST. NAZAIRE (Loire Inférieure), page 45. Buffet.

Hôtel Bély. Breakfast, 2f. 50c.; dinner, 3f.

Hôtel de la Marine on the port.

Rail to Vannes, 1st class, 13f. 75c.; 2nd class, 11f. 50c.; 3rd class, 6f. 50c.

Diligence by Escoublac to La Guérande, 19k., and Le Croisic, 32k., 8.30 A.M., 7.45 P.M., 2f. 80c. and 3f. 90c.; leaves La Guérande for Le Croisic, 9.45 A.M., 9 P.M.; returns to St. Nazaire from Le Croisic, 5.30 A.M., 1 P.M., calling at La Guérande and Escoublac. A carriage from St. Nazaire to Le Croisic, *viâ* Guérande and Bourg de Batz, 18f.

LA GUÉRANDE (Loire Inférieure), page 49.

Hôtel du Commerce.

LE CROISIC (Loire Inférieure), page 56.

Bathing-place. Hôtel and Établissement des Bains. A hydropathic establishment. In the town a small cheap boarding-house, Pension Jeanne.

Le Pouliguen (Loire Inférieure), page 62.
Bathing-place, Hôtel des Etrangers. Lodgings may be had both at Le Croisic and Le Pouliguen.

La Roche Bernard, page 64. 26k. from La Guérande. There is a small inn, but it is sometimes shut up.
Diligence to Pont Château station, 19k., 7.30 A.M. ; returns from Pont Château to La Roche Bernard, 5.20 P.M., 2f. 25c.

Redon (Ille et Vilaine), page 66. Buffet.
Hôtel de Bretagne.

Rochefort-en-Terre (Morbihan), page 67. Reached from Malansac station or by carriage from Vannes.
Diligence leaves Malansac, 5k., 9.25 A.M., 3.48 P.M., 50c. ; leaves Rochefort for Malansac, 7.30 A.M., 2.55 P.M.

Vannes (Morbihan), page 73. Omnibus, 30c.
Hôtel du Dauphin, Place Napoléon le Grand, comfortable ; good table d'hôte, breakfast, 2f. 50c. ; dinner, 3f. Hôtel de France. A carriage may be hired (Rue du Mené, just opposite Hôtel de Commerce,) with one horse, to Elven, 8f. ; the peninsula of Rhuys, 15f. ; to St. Anne, &c., 12f. Jean Picard's boat to Locmariaker, Gavr 'Inis, &c., 15f.
Rail to Auray, 1st class, 2f. 50c. ; 2nd class, 2f. ; 3rd class, 1f. 50c.
Diligence to Sarzeau, 24k., 4 P.M. ; leaves Sarzeau, 7 A.M., 1f. 25c.
Post Office, Place Napoléon.
Photographer, Place Napoléon.
Booksellers, Madame Galles, Rue de la Préfecture; Monsieur Cauderan, Rue de la Préfecture.

Sarzeau (Morbihan), page 104.
Hôtel des Voyageurs.

St. Gildas, page 105. The Sisters take boarders at a very reasonable rate. There is good bathing at St. Gildas.

PORT NAVALO, page 116.

Hôtel de la Marine. The Belle Ile steamer stops here for passengers on its way to and from Auray.

PLOERMEL, page 118.

Hôtel des Voyageurs; can be reached by carriage from Vannes, about 50k. by way of Malestroit, or by diligence from Questembert station; diligence leaves Questembert at 10 A.M., 4 P.M.

A diligence runs between Ploërmel and Josselin, 12k.

JOSSELIN (Morbihan), page 123.

Hôtel Grande Maison Croix d'Or. From Josselin to Vannes, by St. Jean de Brevelai, 42k.

LOCMARIAKER (Morbihan), page 137.

Hôtel Marchand.

ST. ANNE D'AURAY (Morbihan), page 149

Omnibus, 50c.

Hôtel Lion d'Or.

AURAY (Morbihan), page 162.

Buffet.

Hotels—

Pavillon d'en Haut, extremely clean, well-served, and comfortable, but more expensive than either Vannes or Quimper.

De la Poste; a carriage with one horse may be had for about 10f. per day.

Steamer leaves Auray three times a week for Belle Ile.

Rail to Baud, 1st class, 2f.; 2nd class, 1f. 50c.; 3rd class, 1f. 25c.

CARNAC (Morbihan), page 165.

Hôtel des Voyageurs.

PLOUHARNEL (Morbihan), page 172.

Hôtel des Voyageurs.

BAUD (Morbihan), page 186.

Inn Chapeau Rouge, dinner excellent.

Omnibus, 50c.

Rail to Pontivy, 1st class, 4f. 50c.; 2nd class, 4f.; 3rd class, 3f.

ST. NICOLAS DES EAUX (Morbihan), page 177. No inn.

PONTIVY (Morbihan), page 195.

Hôtel Grosset, good; breakfast, 2f.: bottle of wine, 1f.

Carriage to Hennebont, *viâ* St. Nicodème, 20f.

HENNEBONT (Morbihan), page 217. Inn.

Rail to L'Orient, 1st class, 1f. 50c.; 2nd class, 1f.; 3rd class, 75c.

Rail to Quimperlé, 1st class, 3f. 50c.; 2nd class, 2f. 75c.; 3rd class, 1f. 95c.

L'ORIENT (Morbihan), page 225. Buffet.

Omnibus, 25c.

Hôtel de France.

QUIMPERLÉ (Finistère), page 226.

Omnibus.

Hôtel des Voyageurs, the only good one.

Carriage to Le Faouët, Ste. Barbe, and St. Fiacre, 24k., 10f.

Carriage to Pont Aven.

Rail to Quimper, 1st class, 5f. 75c.; 2nd class, 4f. 25c.; 3rd class, 3f. 10c.

LE FAOUËT (Morbihan), page 238.

Inn, Lion d'Or.

PONT AVEN (Finistère), page 250.

Hôtel des Voyageurs (Mdlle Julia Guillou), very good and cheap.

CONCARNEAU (Finistère), page 257.

QUIMPER (Finistère), page 265.

Omnibus, 60c.

Hôtel de l'Epée, comfortable and moderate.

Diligence to Pont l'Abbé, 18k., 5 P.M., 1f. 25c.; from Pont l'Abbé to Quimper, 8 A.M.

Diligence to Douarnenez, 23k., and Audierne, 44k., 2.30 P.M.; from Audierne to Quimper, 4 P.M., 3f.

Rail to Chateaulin, 1st class, 3f. 75c.; 2nd class, 2f. 80c.; 3rd class, 2f. 25c.

Carriages, Rancillac Rue.
Bookseller, Salaun.
Post Office, Quai du Steir.
Telegraph, 6, Rue Sainte Thérèse.

PONT L'ABBÉ (Finistère), page 279.
Hôtel Duhamel,

AUDIERNE (Finistère), page 287.
Hôtel du Commerce. Breakfast, 2f. 50c.; dinner, 3f. A carriage can be hired here for Pointe du Raz. Pont Croix and Douarnenez for 15f.

DOUARNENEZ (Finistère), page 305. Bathing-place.
Hôtel des Voyageurs, good table d'hôte; expenses 6f. 30c. to 7f. per day.
Boat to Crozon.
Carriage to Crozon and Chateaulin.

CROZON (Finistère), page 311.
Hôtel Renoult.

CAMARET (Finistère), page 312. Inn.

CHATEAULIN (Finistère), page 314.
Omnibus, 50c.
Hôtel de la Grande Maison.
Rail to Brest, 1st class, 8f. 50c.; 2nd class, 6f. 80c.; 3rd class, 5f. 40c.
Carriages, Guédas.

BREST (Finistère), page 320.
Omnibus, 50c.
Hotels—
Grand Hotel, good and expensive.
Hôtel des Voyageurs, Rue de Siam.

BRITTANY
Railways open
" constructing
Author's Route
English Miles
0 2 4 6 8 10 20 30 40 50
Kilomètres
0 4 8 12 16 20 40 60 80
Longitude West of Greenwich
5
4
49
48
47
les Sept Isles
I. de Bas
St Pol de Léon
LANNION
MORLAIX
Lesneven
Ile d'Ouessant
Ouessant
Landerneau
BREST
Daoulas
P. St Matthieu
Camaret
Landévennec
le Faou
Crozon
Telgruc
Morgat
P. de la Chèvre
B. of Douarnenez
Ile Trisun
Plonevez
Porzay
Douarnenez
B. des Trépassés
Pt du Raz
Pont Croix
Comfort
Guengat
I. de Seins
Plogoff
Tugean
Audierne
QUIMPER
Locmaria
Kerdoun
Rosporden
Bay of Plovan
Audierne
Pont l'Abbé
Fouesnant
Concarneau
Nizon
Locudy
Tregunc
Nevez
Pont Aven
Pte de Penmarch
Penmarch
Lescoüil
Cte of Ilenan
Is de Glenan
Ile de Groix
Groix
Belle-Ile en Mer
Carhaix
Rostrenen
CHATEAULIN
Canal
Monts Noires
Gourin
St Barbe Ch.
le Faouet
Kernascléden
St Fiacre Ch.
Scaër
Bannalec
Isak
Scorf R. Ch.
QUIMPERLÉ
Gestel
Hennebo
L'ORIENT
Port Louis
Erdeven
Plouharnel
Ft Penthièvre
Quibéron
Belle Ile
Monts d'Arrez
FINISTÈRE
CÔTES
Belle Ile
Guemé
Castane
R. Blavet
Ile d'Ouessant

London; Ch

Windus, Piccadilly.

Edwd Weller.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

WRITING a book on Normandy of any moderate dimensions seemed a presumptuous and almost impossible task—it was unsatisfactory and tantalising to hint only at subjects full of interest, and to show corners instead of the whole of many places worthy a much closer and deeper investigation than I had space or science to give; but this feeling of hopelessness becomes far stronger in writing about Brittany, where perhaps one can say truthfully every barren plain bears, either visibly or beneath its brown soil, some mysterious token of an epoch before history began, and frequently also of one or other of the various invaders, who, though they have impressed their presence on the

hills and riversides and barren heaths, yet have left the ancient people much as they found them.

The cross now surmounts the menhir, and the statue of the Virgin is niched over the fountain of remote date, where once the Korrigan reigned supreme; but the worship is still full of dark superstition, a strange mixture of Christianity and of the paganism of the weird days when the sacred vervain could work miracles and the mistletoe was the emblem of the priests. The old stories of human sacrifices seem, according to many writers, to have been libels on the Druids; but it is impossible to contemplate the monstrous misshapen blocks of stone, scattered over the length and breadth of the province of Brittany, without an intense conviction that these stones have witnessed fearful rites, in which probably demons have been worshipped and called on to consecrate the tombs, if they are tombs, of departed chiefs honoured by these colossal memorials.

After the prehistoric period and its remains, which seem to be involved in such a sea of dispute that it is useless to venture an opinion thereon, we come to traces of Roman and Gallic occupation. It is true these are far less frequent than in Normandy; but still there are Roman roads and Gallo-Roman villas and tiles, while coins, &c., that have been unearthed are to be seen in the museums of the larger towns, besides the many interesting relics in private local collections.

Then there are the marvellous legends of King Grallon, or Gradlon, an emigrant from Great Britain, and his wicked daughter, Ahès or Dahut, and the submersion of the city of Is; legends of the Bluebeard of Cornouaille, the fierce Comorre, of the marvellous SS. Corentin, Gildas, Ronan,

and others, whose words seem to have been law in the land. Then we come to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table, whose chief exploits, according to Breton chroniclers, happened in Brittany, and not in Britain; Avalon, the Ile de Sein, and the forest of Brocéliande, where Merlin still lies sleeping, being all in Brittany.

Then come records of wars with the Frankish Kings of France, against whom Brittany maintained her independence as a nation, as she also did finally against the Norman invaders of the ninth century; and next, most deeply interesting to us English, the struggle between the rival houses of Montfort and Blois, with Du Guesclin for its central figure. Then comes good Duchess Anne, whose memory lives in stone in some of the towns of her duchy; and last of all the annexation, which has provoked a lament, still living in the heart of all true Bretons. "We are not French," they tell you, "we are the people of our own country." It is this special nationality that makes Brittany more interesting than any other part of France; it is a country by itself, and its people are more unlike the French than the Welsh or Scotch are unlike their English neighbours. This is especially the case in the three departments of Morbihan, Finistère, and the Côtes du Nord, although the north-east portions of this last are becoming very French.

The struggles of the Chouans during the French Revolution, although chiefly occurring in La Vendée, still reached into Brittany, and every now and then we are reminded of them.

In Finistère the most striking scenery, both inland and seacoast, is to be found. Here, too, are some of the finest

churches—the cathedrals of Quimper and St. Pol de Léon, the churches of Le Folgoët and of Pont Croix and of the Creizker. Costume varies in the most surprising manner throughout the province of Brittany; there are always the same main features—the square-cut bodies and straight-falling skirts of the women, the short jackets and large black hats of the men, and the black velvet and silver button trimmings—but the caps and collars vary almost in every commune; and if a Breton girl of the peasant class leaves her native place and takes service in a town at some distance she still wears the cap of her country; and for this reason market-day in the larger towns offers a most composite display of costumes—in Finistère and Morbihan of caps and collars, in the Côtes du Nord of the neckerchief and bibbed apron.

In Morbihan we felt that we were among a different race to the inhabitants of Nantes and other parts of the Loire Inférieure, but it is not till one enters Finistère that one understands the phrase *Breton bretonnante.* Either Sunday or market-day in Quimper shows one the true Breton, with his long tangled hair, his trunk hose, his gaily embroidered garments, his immense black hat, and his fierce black eyes gleaming beneath it. He speaks Breton too, and has very little comprehension of French; he drinks whenever he can get the chance, though he is said to do this only at the Pardons; he is very rough and impulsive, and he seems often to treat his wife like a beast of burden. But he is the most picturesque-looking creature possible, and has a certain grand dignified manner at times which contrasts as strangely with the dirt and squalor in which he lives as the handsome old carved beds and presses

and chests in his house contrast with the uneven mud floors, and the proximity of the cow-house and the pigs and poultry, which last mingle with the children on the dirty ground.

The Loire Inférieure and Ille et Vilaine are for the most part more like France than Brittany. It is in Morbihan and Finistère that those who wish to make acquaintance with the Celtic Bretons should chiefly travel. The great feature of Pardons and fête-days in Finistère is the variety of brilliant colour in the women's dresses, and this is generally good and harmonious, especially when a little wear in the intense sunshine has toned its effects; for, judging by our own experience, the months of July and August are one uninterrupted glow of fine weather, although Nantes has the reputation of having a hundred and thirty rainy days in the year.

The traveller, then, who seeks for novelty and originality should visit the three departments of Morbihan, Finistère, and Côtes du Nord, which Breton writers agree in dividing, according to the ancient bishoprics, into the countries of Vannes, of Cornouaille, of Léon, and of Tréguier.

Vannes, which is entirely Celtic in its features, represents Morbihan. The Vannetais were the fighting men of Brittany. Cæsar said, when he tried to conquer them, that they had bodies of iron and hearts of steel. They are graver than the men of Cornouaille, more sombre and self-possessed, and there is a sternness in their legends and traditions. The Vannetais played the fearful game of Soule long after it had been given up by the other provinces. It is near Vannes that we meet with legends of hideous dwarfs who inhabit the dolmens and cromlechs, and of malicious

Korrigans who haunt the fountains; and it is chiefly in Morbihan that we find the special and most interesting features of Brittany, its megalithic remains—it is extraordinary how soon these uncouth blocks of stone exert a power of fascination, a kind of weird influence, which makes one after a while inclined to travel wherever menhirs and dolmens are to be seen and examined.

Cornouaille, with its chief city of Quimper, does not embrace the whole of Finistère, but reaches from Quimperlé to Brest northwards, and as far as Morlaix and to Pontivy eastwards. This is perhaps, as a whole, the most interesting part of Brittany—*la vraie Bretagne bretonnante;* and we very soon notice the difference in character between the Kernewotes and the Vannetais: the first are so much dirtier, so much gayer, so much more excitable and turbulent. In the market at Quimper or Quimperlé the talk and laughter are incessant; there is much less of the silent, solemn aspect which repelled us at Vannes and at St. Nicodême. But on the coast, with its cruel rocks jagged and torn by the frightful violence of the sea, where every year so many vessels leave their spars and the bones of their crews to whiten on the brown "goëmont," the spirits of the people seem to be overshadowed by the perils and disasters that lurk around the iron-bound coast, and which are hinted at in the weird legends of the Baie des Trepassés and of the Druidesses of Séné.

The men of Penmarc'h and Douarnenez are almost as silent as the Léonnais. The country, too, of Cornouaille is wildly beautiful, even grand, at its seacoast—a series of jagged and terrible rocks and lofty headlands, between which sandy bays encourage stretches of foam-fringed blue

sea. The two ranges of hills—les Montagnes Noires, reaching from Carhaix to the Menèz Hom, or Menehom, near Chateaulin, and on to the sea, and the Montagnes d'Arrée, a range of hills stretching across the country from east to west, between Morlaix and Huelgoat—are both in Finistère; also many charming rivers—the Elle, the Odet, the Elorn, and others. In Cornouaille especially, although we heard of this also in Morbihan, the old custom of asking a girl in marriage by means of the Bazvalan still exists.

Next comes Léon, the country north of Brest and of the Montagnes d'Arrée, of which St. Pol de Léon, the ancient Occismor, was the capital. If we felt the difference between the men of Morbihan and the men of Cornouaille, the change from the Kernewote to the Léonnais is far more striking. At Landiviziau, in the Léonnais, we engaged a driver for some days, and were constantly struck by the contrast between his rough, noisy, impulsive ways and those of the quiet, decorous peasants in the villages we passed through. It soon came out that our coachman was a Kernewote, and had been brought up in the mines at Huelgoat, till his love for horses made him take a situation in a stable at Landiviziau.

The Léonnais are said to be extremely devout, but their religion and their superstitions are of a darker, gloomier character than those of their neighbours of Tréguier. Their marriages are the most improvident in Brittany. As soon as the matter is arranged and the marriage day settled between a very poor young man and woman, the young people go round and invite all their friends and chance acquaintances. Each guest brings a present in the shape of food, flax, furniture, sometimes money; and these pre-

sents form the marriage feast for sometimes two or three hundred wedding guests, and also help to set up the household of the young pair, who, in some cases, would not have a bed to lie on without the help of their friends.

The reverence of the Léonnais for children is remarkable. At St. Pol, Souvestre says, no woman will suckle an infant without crossing herself, and if you pass a woman with a child in her arms you must say, "God bless you!" He also says that a man will not strike even his worst enemy if he has a child in his arms.

Throughout Brittany beggars are not only tolerated, but are treated with much kindness and hospitality; but in Léon the beggar is an honoured guest, and in recompense he relates all the local news which he has collected in his wanderings—news of births, marriages, and deaths, of the cures effected at a Pardon or by the water of a fountain; and when these are exhausted he recites some of the ballads and poems which, handed down from father to son, and perpetually added to by the talent for improvisation which belongs to many of these strange people, have had much to do in preserving the nationality of Brittany and keeping out the inroads of civilisation.

The Breton dislikes strangers; he does not care for foreign news or for politics, unless these relate to his beloved hills and valleys and landes, or to the storm-beaten coast which he inhabits; but he loves to hear laments for *le temps passé*, or ballads such as "Le Combat des Trente" or "Jeanne la Flamme," which recall the valour of his ancestors; although these would be more likely to find favour in Cornouaille or Morbihan than in Léon. There is less ballad-making in this quiet sombre province than in Tréguier or Cornouaille;

yet some of the saddest of the charming poems in the "Barzaz Breiz" are in the dialect of Léon—"La Fiancée de Satan," "Notre Dame du Folgoët," "L'Héritière de Kéroulaz," and "Le Marquis de Guérand."

No one should travel in Brittany without the "Barzaz Breiz;" it seems to open one's eyes to the inner life—half mystic, half devout—which is the essence of the Breton character, and which will probably enable the Bretons as a nation to preserve for some time their idiosyncrasy against an influx of railways and tourists. Every event, every legend, is chronicled in verse, and many of these lays are very ancient. "Le Rossignol," on which Marie de France founded her lay, is said to be earlier than the thirteenth century; and yet, till Monsieur de Villemarqué began his labours of love, it does not appear that much effort had been made to chronicle these dramatic ballads and poems, which have lived in the memories and on the lips of the people. The subject of the Breton bards is so very interesting and yet so far-reaching that I dare not dwell on it, especially as Monsieur de Villemarqué has treated it exhaustively in others of his books besides the interesting preface to the "Barzaz Breiz."

Mr. Tom Taylor* has admirably translated several of these very remarkable and spirited poems, but there are still many others of great beauty, and which, to those who have become acquainted with Brittany and the Bretons, are most vivid and lifelike.

But Brizeux, the poet of Brittany, in "Les Bretons" and other works, gives most realistic as well as most poetic pictures of the manners and customs of his countrymen.

* "Ballads and Songs of Brittany."

The last province is Tréguier, which answers as nearly as possible to the Côtes du Nord. The Trégorrois at first sight is less intensely national than either the man of Vannes, of Léon, or of Cornouaille. His costume is less special, and French is more generally spoken throughout his country; there are also more manor-houses than fortresses in Tréguier, life is more gentle, and there is less squalid poverty than in Cornouaille; and nowhere else, not even in Léon, is the power of the priesthood so paramount. One cannot travel without becoming aware of this fact. As the coasts of Cornouaille and Léon furnish the best sailors to France, so Tréguier is the great nursery of the Breton priesthood. Here chiefly the *kloar* or *kloarek*, as the student for holy orders is called, studies his vocation, although there are seminaries all over the country. Taken from a poor peasant home, he lives and lodges hardly; and when he comes home for long summer and winter holidays is treated with reverence by all, even by his parents, and it often happens that, during these idle hours spent with old companions among the orchards and in the harvest-fields, he sees some maiden whose good looks tempt him to regret his vocation, and to rebel against the life which dooms him to celibacy. Brizeux has shown this in "Loïc."

The Trégorrois have a special talent for improvisation, and their voices are said to be more musical than those of their neighbours when they sing their ballads at the Pardons. Their religion is less gloomy than that of the Léonnais. One should, perhaps, go to a wedding or a wrestling-match in Cornouaille, a funeral in Léon, and a festival or a pilgrimage in Tréguier, where processions and hymns, songs and dances, replace the rougher sports

enacted at the Pardons of the Kernewote, although dancing seems to be a popular amusement everywhere. These popular rites, especially the weddings and Pardons of Brittany, give a colour and interest to its towns and villages as special as attractive, and take the traveller back to the Middle Ages as he gazes at the quaintly garbed processions and violent sports of the stalwart dark-eyed people, so uncouth, yet so indescribably picturesque. A knowledge of Breton is very helpful in listening to the ballads of the mendicants or old women, who in some parts of the country still make a profession of story-telling.

The religious plays of the Bretons were still acted a few years ago in Tréguier. There are many interesting churches and châteaux to be seen in this part of the country. Besides the ruined abbey of Beauport, Tréguier possesses two most interesting cathedrals, those of Dol and Tréguier.

At first sight the Bretons appear cold, sullen, and repelling; but they are really a very interesting people, and yet very unlike their Norman neighbours. They are sadly addicted to drink, and are very dirty in their habits, especially in out-of-the-way districts; they are obstinate, but they seem fairly honest and sincere, and the men are brave and independent; they seem too to be a religious, thoughtful, and self-respecting race. Their language is troublesome to learn, as there are several different dialects. In many villages in Finistère only a few of the inhabitants speak French. There is perhaps more resemblance between Britons and Bretons than between Bretons and Frenchmen; one special point of resemblance is that of being good sailors. The French navy is chiefly composed of Bretons.

Brittany has also a special attraction for English people, for if, as the French people say, we were conquered by the Duke of Normandy, and are therefore, after all, only a Norman colony, we certainly colonised Brittany, and the first reputed king of that country was born in Troynovant, the ancient London, in the time of the Emperor Gratian.

It seems to be certain that in the century preceding the birth of Christ Great Britain and Ireland were inhabited by the same race, who at that time peopled the north-west provinces of France, or, to speak more correctly, by a mixture of two races, the Gaels and the Cymri. When the Romans invaded Armorican Britain, or Brittany, the western portion of Celtic Gaul consisted of six provinces, inhabited by people who spoke the same language, but each possessing an independent form of government. The Romans called these people Diablinthes (afterwards Madonienses or Malouins), Rhedones (or people of Rennes), Nannetes (or people of Nantes), Curiosolites (afterwards people of Tréguier), and people of St. Brieuc, under the names Trecorenses and Briocenses, Veneti and Ossismienses. When part of the territory of the Veneti and that which remained of the Curiosolites was merged in the diocese of Coriso-pitenses, or Quimper, the Ossismiens called themselves Legionenses or Léonnais, a name given them by the Romans. The diocese of Quimper went by the name of Cornu-Galliæ, or Cornouaille; and the northern part of Breton Armorica, comprising the dioceses of Léon, St. Brieuc, and Dol, by that of Donnonée.

There is no authentic history of ancient Brittany; the Druids, who still existed in the seventh century, and their bards have left no records but those which still linger in some

of the more ancient ballads; and, although there were many Christian monasteries at that time, the monks seem to have been too busy in weaning the people from their ancient faith to occupy themselves with chronicling the events of their time.

According to some authorities, the history of Brittany begins with Brutus, grandson of Ascanius, who founded the city of Occismor before he landed in Great Britain and built Troynovant, while others say that Gomer, the son of Japhet, settled in Armorica, and begot the Celtic race there. M. de la Borderie divides Breton history into three periods: from B.C. 56 to A.D. 938, that is from Julius Cæsar to Alain Barbe Torte, the first Duke of Brittany; from 938 to 1532, when, after the death of Duchess Anne, Brittany was annexed to France; and from 1532 to 1789. And these periods he again subdivides into B.C. 56 to A.D. 455, Gallo-Roman period; 455 to 753, the immigration from Great Britain under Conan Meriadech, the subversion of the Druids, and the struggles of the Breton kings with the Carlovingians; 753 to 938, during which period the existence of Brittany as a separate nation was severely menaced.

The first real history we come to is the memorable war undertaken by Julius Cæsar on the occasion of the resistance which the warlike Veneti offered to his all-conquering arms. And this war seems to have been the cause of the Roman invasion of our island; for, Great Britain having aided the Veneti, when Cæsar had conquered that people he made his first voyage across the channel in order to punish the Britons for their audacity. A fabulous history of Breton kings begins with Conan Meriadech, who, in the reign of the Roman emperor

Gratian, at the end of the fourth century, came over from Great Britain with the Roman general Maximus, recently proclaimed emperor by his own troops. Maximus had robbed Conan of the probable succession to the kingdom of Britain, and he offered as a recompense to associate him with the conquests he proposed to make in Gaul. Conan landed at Occismor, then occupied by a Roman garrison, and as soon as the country was conquered he was crowned king at Rennes. The Bretons had never submitted willingly to the Roman yoke, and Conan having restored to them all the privileges of which the invaders had robbed them, soon found himself able to pacify the nation he had conquered.

He sent to Britain for the wives and children of his companions, and also wrote to Dionotus, then King of Troynovant, to ask his beautiful daughter Ursula in marriage. She set sail, magnificently habited, and accompanied by a very large number of beautiful damsels, her companions. They had hardly started when a fearful storm arose, and wrecked their fleet of boats on the coasts of Holland, near the mouth of the Rhine. Here the unhappy virgins were cruelly massacred by a horde of Picts and Huns; but St. Ursula and her companions were canonised by the Church as martyrs. At this time Brittany seems to have been divided between Druid worship, the pagan mythology of the Roman invaders, and the beginning of Christianity, in the third century preached by St. Clair, and watered into fuller progress by the blood of the martyrs SS. Donatien and Rogatien.

The two most celebrated of the Druid academies were in Belle Ile and the isle of Ushant; there was another in the isle of Sein, but this was devoted to priestesses who were con-

sulted by sailors as to the issue of their voyages. The priests of Belle Ile had a college in the peninsula of Quiberon, and it is supposed that at a fixed time every year the Druids of the whole of Brittany, from Belle Ile, Ouessant, Douarnenez, Pointe du Raz, Ile de Batz, with deputations from Mona, the Hebrides, the Orkneys, and Ireland, met at Carnac. There the priestesses, barefooted, dressed in white, crowned with vervain, the sacred reaping-hooks hanging from their golden girdles, carried solemnly in a snow-white veil the Selago (*Pulsatilla*) gathered on the sixth day of the moon. At the conclusion of these solemnities, which no profane eyes ever witnessed, an enormous rock was erected in memorial.

The power of the Druids was immense, but the intrepid Conan Meriadech resolved to destroy this empire, especially as he saw danger to himself in the dislike with which these heathen philosophers regarded him. He convoked the states-general at Rennes. The Druids declared that only three classes were suitable for election in this assembly—the people, the nobles or fighting-men, and the priests. Their decision being accepted, almost all Christian priests were elected, and the Druids found themselves a small minority. Then Moderan, the Bishop of Rennes, rose and declaimed against the practices of the Druids, till Uheldeda, the high priestess, moved to fury, rose also and cursed Conan and crushed the mystic plant which she had brought solemnly into the assembly.

This was enough. Conan bade the Druids depart for ever from the assembly; their colleges were closed, and they were forbidden to instruct the youth of Brittany.

But the curse of Uheldeda lived. Calamities which happened from time to time were said to be caused by the

priestesses of Sein, or Séné, and Conan sent troops to the island to bring the culprits to his presence. The soldiers landed at Sein, burned the sacred groves, and killed the Druids who had gathered to defend their priestesses. Uheldeda and some of her companions stabbed themselves, singing their own death dirge; those who survived were brought before Conan, and were at once condemned to death. A few days later a violent fever ended the life of the conqueror of Brittany. He died regretted by all but the partisans of the Druids, and was buried at St. Pol de Léon.

The great improbability of the sole sovereignty of Conan Meriadech seems to lie in the fact that at that time Great Britain was divided into numerous petty states, and also that for centuries afterwards Brittany seems to have been in the same condition. But whether Conan Meriadech be an historical or a traditionary personage, it is certain that all the kings and dukes of Brittany acknowledged him as their ancestor.

Christianity seems to have entered Brittany before this, SS. Clair and Adeodatus having evangelised Nantes and Vannes in the third century, and a goodly company of saints seems to have followed. In the sixth century there evidently existed in Armorica at least four little kingdoms, governed by either kings or counts: Donnonée, between the mouth of the Couësnon and the Morlaix river, containing the ancient bishoprics of Dol, St. Malo, St. Brieuc, and Tréguier; Léon, reaching from the Morlaix river to the Elorn, the ancient diocese of Léon; Cornouaille, between the Elorn and the Elle, ancient diocese of Quimper; Broeree, or Le Vannetais, ancient diocese of Vannes and the county of Poher, really a part of Cornouaille.

After Conan come several mythical kings, always in close alliance with the sovereigns of Britain. The most notable is Grallon the Great, about 490, with his three counsellors, St. Corentin, St. Ronan, and St. Wingaloc, and his notorious daughter, the Princess Dahut or Ahès. In the sixth century appeared the famous Merlin, born in the isle of Sein, the offspring of a nun and a demon, who hoped by the means of this child to destroy Christianity; but as Merlin was baptized the parents were disappointed. He went heartily into the service first of Uther Pendragon and then of his son Arthur. Arthur and his cousin Hoel the Great came to their respective thrones about 513; but Arthur was so fiercely attacked by the Scots and Picts that Hoel had to go over from Brittany to his assistance.

This Hoel le Grand seems to have stayed some time in Great Britain, and to have been present at the creation of the Knights of the Round Table. Till the reign of Comorre, Count of Poher, in 520, the Breton princes had not submitted to France; but this wicked prince, finding himself hated by all his neighbours, made himself the vassal of Childebert, King of Paris, and with his assistance took possession of the lordship of Donnonée.

About this period cider was invented by St. Guenolé as an ascetic drink. Vannes, at this time in possession of the Franks, was taken by Waroch II. about 577, and then came constant warfare between Bretons and Franks. In the reign of Hoel II. Riwallo Murmaezon established the kingdom of Donnonée, but it seems to have been as much disturbed as the rest of Brittany. In the middle of the sixth century Conobert, Count of Nantes, having sheltered the family of his wife's brother-in-law, Chramme, son of King Clotaire I.

of France, Clotaire invaded Brittany; and, although his son finally submitted, he burned him alive with all his family.

Judhäel was one of the good Kings of Donnonée, and the famous bard Taliessin, an exile from Great Britain, and who lived in a cromlech in the peninsula of Rhuis, interpreted a dream, which foretold to Judhäel the wonderful qualities of his son Judicael. At this time Hoel III. was on the throne of Brittany, and when Judicael died, after a good and glorious reign, the kingdom of Donnonée was reunited to that of Brittany. Solomon II. was then reigning; and in the time of his successor, Alain, the tyranny of the Angles caused an immense expatriation of Britons, who under the guidance of Cadwallador took refuge in Armorica, landing at Guy d'Aleth (St. Malo). At the death of Alain discord descended on Brittany, which King Pepin of France was astute enough to profit by. He sent an army and conquered the towns of Nantes, Rennes, Dol, and St. Malo, setting up governors and imposing a tribute.

Charlemagne insisted on the payment of this tribute, and much war and disorder arose in consequence, as the Bretons were still too much divided among themselves to elect a king to lead them against the invader. There were still two princes left of the ancient race of Conan, named Riwallo and Nomenoë. Nomenoë had submitted to the emperor, and had been named in 826, by Louis le Débonnaire, Grand Justiciary; but, at the death of Louis le Débonnaire, when Danish pirates made a descent on the Côtes du Nord and attacked Tréguier, Nomenoë took the command of the army, and after a bloody battle, in which the loss on each side was equal, he showed so much skill in treating with the pirates that they promised never to

revisit the Breton shores. In 841 Nomenoë threw off the yoke, and five years later the independence of Brittany was re-established. It is curious that a direct line of kings seems to have been established about the same time both in Britain and in Brittany.

In the reign of Alain the Great, Charles the Simple revived the question of tribute, which the Kings of France had ignored since the days of Nomenoë; and in 921 he gave to Rollo, Duke of Normandy, the right of exacting it. This exaction caused perpetual feud between the Normans and the Bretons. Alain III. was chosen by Robert the Magnificent guardian of his young son William the Bastard. He was poisoned, and buried in the Abbey of Fécamp.

In the fourth and fifth centuries there seem to have reigned, either as kings or counts, Conan Meriadech, Salaün or Solomon I., Grallon, and some others.

Sixth century—Hoel I., Hoel II., Hoel III., and several Kings of Donnonée, including Judhäel.

Seventh century—Solomon II., Judicael of Donnonée, Alain, and another Grallon.

Then comes a period of anarchy till—

841. Nomenoë.
851. Erispoë.
857. Solomon.
874. Pasquilén and Gurvaud.
877. Alain I. (Le Grand).
907. Norman invasion. A period of anarchy till 931, when there was a general massacre of Normans. A Breton chief named Alain Barbe Torte, or Le Renard, had taken refuge in England with King Athelstan, in 936 he returned to Brittany, and in 937 forced the Normans to retire to Nantes. In 938 he took Nantes and finally expelled the invaders, and became the first Duke of Brittany.

DUKES:—

937. Alain (Barbe Torte).
952. Hoel and Guerach.
990. Conan I. (Le Fort).
992. Geoffroy I. and Judicael.
1008. Alain III. and Eudon.
1040. Conan II. (This is the Conan conquered by William, Duke of Normandy.)
1066. Hoel V. (son of Alain Cagniart and Judith).
1084. Alain IV. (Fergent).
1112. Conan III. (Le Gros).
1148. Eudon and several others.
1156. Conan IV. Henry II., Plantagenet, takes Nantes and forces Conan to promise his young daughter Constance to his son Geoffrey, and then insists that Conan shall abdicate till Geoffrey is of age to marry.
1175. Geoffroy II. (Plantagenet).
1196. Constance and her son Arthur. Arthur so named to conciliate the Bretons. The succession at the death of Arthur devolved on Alice, daughter of Constance by her third husband, Guy de Thouars.
1213. Alice and her husband Pierre Mauclerc (of the house of Dreux).
1237. John I. (Le Roux).
1286. John II.
1305. Arthur II.
1312. John III.

1341. The War of Succession between Jeanne la Boiteuse and Charles de Blois and John and Jeanne de Montfort.
1364. John IV.
1399. John V. (Le Bon).
1442. Francis I.
1450. Peter II.
1457. Arthur III.
1458. Francis II.
1488. Anne.

The cheapest ways of reaching Brittany are *viâ* Littlehampton to Morlaix, and by Southampton to St. Malo. The pleasantest way is *viâ* Folkestone, and from Paris *viâ* Chartres, Angers, Le Mans, and Nantes, stopping at all

these interesting towns, and spending several days in Angers and its neighbourhood. Once in Brittany, it is much pleasanter to travel in the small carriages which are to be had everywhere for ten or twelve francs per day, with one horse, sending on heavy luggage by the railway, which goes completely round and across the province, although it avoids many of the most interesting places. The following route may serve as a help to travellers intending to go completely through South Brittany—although the country is so full of interest that there are many places worth a visit which are not in the list.

Nantes—rail or steamer to
St. Nazaire—carriage to
Guérande, Le Bourg de Batz, Le Croisic, and Pouliguen
From Guérande to La Roche Bernard—by carriage
Or back to St. Nazaire, and then by rail, *viâ* Redon, to
Vannes
By carriage from Vannes to
Ploërmel
Josselin
Elven
Boat to
The Morbihan
Locmariaker
Carriage to
Sarzeau
St. Gildas
Sucinio
Tumiac
Port Navalo
Carriage or rail to
Ste. Anne—and to
Auray
Carriage to
Carnac
Plouharnel
Erdeven
Locmariaker
Quiberon

Baud—by rail, and then drive to
{ St. Nicholas
{ St. Nicodème to Pontivy—drive to
Guéméné—rail or drive from Pontivy to
Hennebon—rail to
L'Orient—rail to
Quimperlé—drive to Le Faouet, &c., and to
Pont-aven—drive to
Concarneau—drive to
Rosporden—rail to
Quimper—carriage, diligence, or boat to
Pont l'Abbe—drive to
Penmarc'h
Diligence or carriage from Quimper to
Audierne—drive to Pointe du Raz, Pont Croix, and Douarnenez
Douarnenez
Boat to Crozon, &c.
Douarnenez—drive to
Chateaulin (Landévennec)—rail to
Brest.

A slight acquaintance with the Finistère dialect makes travelling more interesting, as this unlocks the reserve of the peasants; and I especially advise all who intend to visit Brittany to read before they start the "Barzaz Breiz" of Monsieur de Villemarqué, "Les Bretons," and the other poems of Brizeux, and "Les Derniers Bretons," by Emile Souvestre; also to procure in Vannes the excellent little "Guide des Touristes dans le Morbihan," by the late Monsieur Fouquet. For those who seek the real attractions that Brittany holds in the way of antiquities, I strongly recommend a very plain and explicit little book, "Guide to the Chambered Barrows, &c., of South Brittany," by Rev. W. C. Lukis, F.S.A. The little guide Joanne is too well known to need recommendation; it is a most useful handbook, except that it does very scant justice to the interesting old town of Vannes.

I have said little of the strange habits and customs of Brittany, of the almost idyllic charm that seems to hang about their lazy, happy, outdoor village life, with its merry-making and dances, and the never-failing ballads and tales, or the weird music of the bagpipe; but the traveller will learn all this for himself if he visits either the out-of-the-way places along the coast or in the interior. Above all, he will notice the reckless and improvident system of farming —the absence of corn and hay ricks—the corn being threshed as soon as reaped in some of the finest August weather in the open air. Every day as one travels in this fresh unspoiled country one is charmed and amused by some beauty of nature or some strange and unusual sight or custom; and one feels that many months might be passed in Brittany before this pleasure could be exhausted. There are several interesting places, both in Loire Inférieure and in Ille et Vilaine, not described in this book, as, for instance, the towns of Chateaubriand and of Ancenis, and the ruined castles of Champtocé—the scene of the horrors enacted by Gilles de Retz—of Oudon on the Loire; and nearly facing it the ruins of Champtoceaux, where Clisson's daughter, the cruel Margaret de Penthièvre, imprisoned her sovereign, John V. of Brittany, to avenge the treason of the duke's father, John IV., towards her own father, the famous Constable.

I have to acknowledge much kindness and courtesy from Mr. George Bullen and the authorities in the Reading Room of the British Museum, and from the librarian of Quimper; I have also gained some valuable facts regarding the lines of Carnac, &c., from Sir Henry Dryden and Rev. W. C. Lukis.

I do not recommend Brittany to the commonplace self-centred traveller, who can put up with no discomfort, who sacrifices his sense of beauty to a fastidious appetite, and who considers that he asserts his position by asking the unsophisticated innkeeper for luxuries and extra comforts. He had better keep on the "grande route" eastward and southward of Paris, and be fleeced with dignity. Brittany will be to him as unsatisfactory as the walk was to one of the boys in the story of "Eyes and No Eyes." But to the real pilgrim in search of new ideas, and of peaceful and often rugged beauty, freshness, and originality, and, above all, constant variety and amusement, I promise real enjoyment, clean and comfortable beds, and, with scarcely an exception, good simple food at very moderate prices, and very honest and fair-dealing innkeepers.

NANTES AND THE PENINSULA OF LE CROISIC.

CHAPTER I.

NANTES.

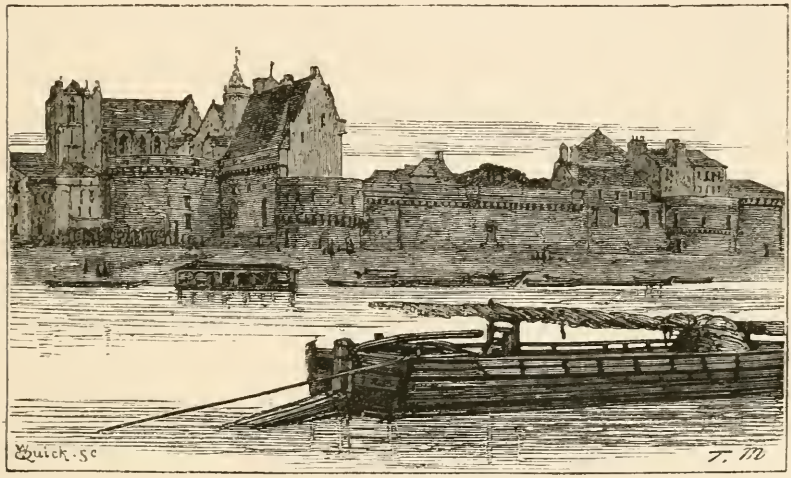
WE did not reach Nantes till quite late at night. The next morning, being a bright Sunday, we got an excellent first impression of the city. The large open Place de Graslin, in front of the Hôtel de France, and the streets leading from it, were filled with people on their way to church; and as we went down the Rue Crébillon—a handsome street, full of good shops—towards the cathedral we saw groups of peasants in the flower-market. The women wore caps of the most quaint and original shape, and the dear little round-eyed children had white close-fitting skull caps and long white pinafores. The Place Royale, at the end of the Rue Crébillon, where the flower-market is held, is very large, with a fine fountain in the centre. The profusion of rare flowers on all sides reminded us how much Nantes lies south of Paris. Magnolias, Cape jessamines, and most exquisite roses were offered us for a few sous the bouquet —and large bouquets too. We turned up a little street on the left of the square to see the church of St. Nicholas, a very

beautiful new building from the designs of Monsieur Lassus. The present Bishop of Nantes, it is said, refused to be consecrated until this church was completed. Evidently no expense has been spared; but it is not quite finished, some of the stone being left unsculptured. We went down again to the Rue d'Orléans, and crossed the bridge over the Erdre, or rather the canal which connects that river with the Loire. The quays here were full of people, some of them in picturesque costumes. We especially noticed a great variety in the handkerchiefs or small shawls worn by the women —from richly embroidered cashmere to dark brown cotton, covered with white and orange sprigs and borders. These, with the Nantais caps and dark cloth dresses, make a charming costume.

There are good shops in the Rue d'Orléans, which changes into the Grande Rue as it approaches the cathedral. We passed the Place de Change, where once stood the most curious house in Nantes—the Maison des Enfants Nantais—now taken down. The two famous Christian martyrs of Nantes — St. Donatien and his brother St. Rogatien, sons of the Count of Nantes—who suffered for the faith in the third century, were called "Les Enfants Nantais."

Up the Rue Briord, on the left, are some curious old houses—for we found ourselves here in a far more ancient part of Nantes than the new western portion round the Place Graslin. The ancient Nantes seems to have scarcely extended west of the Erdre; and memories of the Revolution and of the butcher Carrier, and of the agony and sorrow that have been suffered in some of these houses, become vivid in the old streets near the cathedral. Nos. 9 and 13

of Rue Briord are both old houses. The first is called Hôtel de la Bouvardière, and was built for the well-known Pierre Landais, the treasurer of François II., Duke of Brittany, whose romantic rise and fall have been told by Monsieur Souvestre, in a little story called "Pierre." Later on it gave shelter to the Duchess Anne during the siege of Nantes. Afterwards it became the property of the Duc de Mercœur. Marguerite de Valois also resided there, and Lanoue Bras-



Cathedral and Castle, Nantes.

de-Fer. Madame de Sévigné, Le Nôtre, and Lebrun are said to have successively resided in No. 13. In the Rue Fénélon close by, in the house No. 3, called La Maison à Tourelles, Henry IV. is said to have lodged with Gabrielle d'Estrées.

We went back to the Grande Rue, and soon reached the Place St. Pierre in front of the cathedral. There is nothing to notice in the exterior of this building; but going round it in the Rue St. Laurent on the right is a very remarkable

house of the fifteenth century called La Psallette, with a curious staircase and chimney-piece.

The first effect of the interior of the cathedral is most imposing. The nave is very lofty, 120 feet high, and the arches are singularly graceful. The mouldings of the piers are not broken by caps, but run round triforium and roof. The east end is Romanesque in design, and looks stumpy and heavy contrasted with the nave. The cinquecento screen, too, is very inharmonious, but probably this will be removed when the extensive alterations now in progress are completed. We did not see the gem of the cathedral, the famous tomb of the last Duke of Brittany, Francis II., and his second wife, Marguerite de Foix. This monument has been boarded up for eighteen months, while additions are being made to the east end of the cathedral. We were much disappointed, as the tomb is said to be one of the finest works of Michel Colomb, a native of St. Pol de Léon, and the predecessor of Jean Goujon. It was erected in 1507 by the order of Anne of Brittany. One of the statues at the corners of the tomb, that of Justice, is a portrait of the Duchess Anne herself. The tomb was placed originally in the church Des Carmes, but during the Revolution it was rifled of its contents. In 1817 it was removed to the cathedral, and the remains of the famous Constable de Richemont, Duke Arthur III. of Brittany, were placed within it.

Near the entrance of the church the bases of the piers are ornamented with bas-reliefs; above these are canopies which seem to want statues under them. Service was just going to begin, and the nave was crowded with people. The variety of charming caps was bewildering. The dresses were mostly sombre in colour, of good dark cloth, which clung in

straight massive folds; but the handkerchiefs worn on the shoulders were generally very bright in hue, the ends hidden in front under the bibs of the universal black aprons. This handkerchief seems special to the Loire Inférieure and the Côtes du Nord. We sometimes saw it in Morbihan, but rarely in Finistère.

Presently the procession issued from the sacristy and came round the church, two immense Suisses walking in front with halberts, and carrying in their right hands sticks with huge metal tops, which they strike on the ground as they go. The service was very fine, and the devotion of the congregation was most striking. It reminded us more of the congregation of a Belgian church than of a French one, except that the remarkable costumes made the kneeling groups so much more picturesque, and the strong-featured, large-eyed, earnest Breton faces gave so much intensity to the expression of devotion. Even as the people left the church there was much more devout seriousness in their behaviour than we had noticed in Normandy. We saw scarcely any chattering, laughing recognitions; till some little way from the church an almost stiff seriousness seemed to make a general silence.

The Château cannot be seen after four o'clock, so we went there at once by the Cours St. Pierre; this and the Cours St. André are broad public walks planted with avenues of trees to the east of the cathedral; they reach from each side of the Place Louis Seize to the river Erdre on the north and to the Loire on the south, and occupy the site of the old fortifications. The Cours St. André reaches nearly to the Erdre, and has at that end statues of Olivier de Clisson and of Bertrand du Guesclin, the famous Breton, whose fame and

exploits seem to pervade the whole province, although the most personal associations connected with him are to be found in the Côtes du Nord.

In the centre of the Place is a statue of Louis XVI., and at the end of the Cours St. Pierre, nearest the Loire, are statues of Duchess Anne and the Constable de Richemont. There is a broad flight of steps here leading down to the Loire, and at this point the largest of the daily markets is held for fruit and vegetables; but we turned aside to go into the Château, which is still a very imposing building, although some of its fortifications have been destroyed.

The castle of Nantes does not appear in the early history of the town. It was not founded till the ninth or tenth century, enlarged in the eleventh and in the thirteenth, and almost entirely rebuilt by Francis II., the last hereditary Duke of Brittany, in 1480. All the fortifications are said to be the work of this prince, especially the façade, where three out of the four towers built by him remain. The three towers facing the quay are in excellent preservation, and are said to date from the time of Duchess Anne, who was born in the castle of Nantes, January 25th, 1477.

She left Nantes in 1488, just before her father's death, and for some years her hand was contested by several claimants for the fair duchy of Brittany. At last she married Charles VIII. of France, but in 1498 she came back to Nantes a widow. She then announced her intention of residing in the city, and giving herself up to the government of her beloved country; but her marriage to Louis XII. in the following year took her back to France. She seems, however, always to have regretted Brittany, and she bequeathed her heart to Nantes at her death in 1513.

About twenty years later the duchy of Brittany was solemnly annexed to the crown of France. Instead of being governed by her own dukes, she was henceforth ruled by a governor appointed by the King of France. It seems as if, like the Irish, to this day the Breton people rebel against the annexation, and that they still cherish a hope of independence; and it is this feeling, doubtless, that has kept them so distinct a race from their Norman neighbours. In this busy town of Nantes there is, of course, the mixed population usually found in a maritime place of trade, for, by means of the port of St. Nazaire, Nantes is in communication with every part of the world, and is consequently the resort of crews of all nations; but even in Nantes we were much struck by the entirely different physiognomy of the peasants from any we had hitherto seen.

We passed through the castle gateway, and we stood still in surprise. Coming out of the glare and bustle and modern life of such a thoroughly mercantile town as Nantes, it seems like enchantment to find this exquisite old interior, with its lofty sculptured dormers and cool shady trees. Some guns and piles of shells in a corner told the real nature of the place; a group of soldiers, who were playing at some game, turned and stared at us. From the courtyard we saw where the powder explosion took place in the Tour des Espagnols in 1800, destroying the tower and killing several persons. In this tower still existed the chapel in which Duchess Anne was married to Louis XII. of France.

A very tall man appeared, in answer to our summons, to guide us over the castle. He showed us first the curious well in the courtyard, and then took us through a little ground-floor chamber, which he said was as old as Duchess Anne,

to the floors above the staircase. He told us he was a retired soldier, and he seemed to think the greatest treat he could offer us was the contemplation of Chassepôts of all ages and sizes. I think he must have taken us into four very large rooms filled with murderous weapons. There was the needle-gun, the Snider, the Martini-Henry, and other rifles; but his favourite among all was the Chassepôt, and he was constantly explaining to me the exact manner of using this weapon. Finally he took me into a corner, and raising an old gun a little way off its stand, he said in a low voice, handling the weapon with reverent affection, "This, madame, is the first gun I ever carried."

He next showed us a room full of cuirasses, which he evidently thought a great treasure. I think it was a shock to him as well as a surprise when we hinted that the English made good firearms, for he had been showing us a heavy old blunderbuss as a specimen of English make, and had contrasted it with a modern French Chassepôt. "Ah," he said incredulously, "but all the good guns which are not French are German."

Still he was a pleasant, intelligent guide, and when we reached the top of the Château he explained very distinctly the different points in the grand view that lay stretched out on every side.

It is really necessary to visit either the top of the castle or of the cathedral to gain an idea of the immense breadth of the Loire, subdivided by so many islands that to gain the opposite side of the suburb, built on several of these islands, one has to cross a line of six bridges. There are altogether twenty-one bridges over the rivers Loire and Erdre, between which part of the city is built. One gets

also from this height an excellent idea of Nantes itself. Our guide pointed out with much pride the three new churches, St. Nicholas, St. Clément, and the chapel of Notre Dame de la Sallette. He spoke most reverentially of the bishop, Monseigneur Fournier. He said it was entirely owing to his persevering zeal that the beautiful church of St. Nicholas had been so successfully completed.

Our guide pointed out the side of the castle from which the Cardinal de Retz escaped, by means of a cord, to the Loire—for the river before the building of the quays entirely surrounded the castle. Madame de Sévigné visited the castle soon after this escape. Besides the cardinal, the castle served as a prison to the infamous Gilles de Retz, or Rais, to Fouquet, and to Madame la Duchesse de Berri, who was detained there for a short time after her famous arrest in the Rue Haute-du-Château.

So far as regards its history, Nantes is one of the most eventful towns in France. We hear of it as evangelised by St. Clair, its first bishop, towards the close of the third century. Then comes the persecution of the Christian population by the Romans and the martyrdom of SS. Donatien and Rogatien. Then, when the invasion of the barbarians recalled the Roman armies to Italy, Nantes appears to have been governed by native princes, and by the saintly Bishop St. Felix of Bourges in the sixth century. The rise of Nantes dates from this period, and under the government of the Frankish kings her importance increased.

Till the reign of Nomenoë, King of Brittany, the city seems sometimes to have belonged to Brittany, sometimes to Poitou and Anjou, but from this period Nantes is always ranked as a Breton city. It was entirely ravaged and burned

by the Normans at the end of the ninth century, and lay desolate and ruined for about thirty years. Then Duke Alain Barbe Torte rebuilt it, and divided it into three portions; one he kept as an appanage of the dukedom of Brittany, one he ceded to the bishop, and the third to the Count of Nantes.

This division caused incessant disorders and disputes, and for more than a century Nantes seems to have had a constant change of government, till, in 1084, Alain Fergent succeeded to the double heritage, being both Duke of Brittany and Count of Nantes. The town was regaining its old prosperity, when, in 1118, it was entirely destroyed by fire. With the exception of some portions of the cathedral, the whole of the present city has been built since this period.

The short reign of Geoffrey of Anjou brought a fresh element of discord into Brittany by the setting up of an English claim to the duchy; to this day the name of Henry II. is abhorred in Brittany: also the marriage of Prince Arthur's half-sister Alice to the Frenchman, Pierre Mauclerc, was looked on as a disgrace to the country; and at the death of Duke John III., in 1341, came the long civil war between the rival claimants for the duchy, Charles de Blois, who had married the duke's niece Jeanne la Boiteuse, and De Montfort, the duke's younger brother, also called John, the husband of the famous Jeanne la Flamme. The French, under the command of Du Guesclin and Clisson, took the side of Blois, while Montfort was supported by the English under the command of Sir John Chandos. Nantes was the first large Breton city taken by Charles de Blois, at the beginning of the war in 1341. The first John de Montfort

was taken prisoner there and sent to Paris; but, says Froissart, "the Countess of Montfort, who possessed the courage of a man and the heart of a lion, was in the city of Rennes when she heard of the seizure of her lord, and, notwithstanding the great grief she had at heart, she did all she could to comfort and reanimate her friends and soldiers. Showing them a young child, called John after his father, she said, 'Oh, gentlemen! do not be cast down by what we have suffered through the loss of my lord: he was but one man. Look at my little child here; if it please God he shall be his restorer, and shall do you much service. I have plenty of wealth, which I will distribute among you, and will seek out for such a leader as may give you a proper confidence.'"

But this child, afterwards John IV., gave great offence to his subjects of Nantes at the end of this war. In the interim Nantes had been besieged, sometimes by Du Guesclin, sometimes by De Montfort. When, after the death of Charles de Blois and of the King of France, this John de Montfort was declared duke, he summoned the English under the Earl of Buckingham to besiege Nantes. John, now Duke of Brittany, kept his court at Hennebon, but his nobles and soldiers refused to follow him to Nantes to fight against their own countrymen; so the English army, after waiting some months before Nantes, and suffering greatly from the constant sallies of its garrison, retired to Vannes; and after a while the Duke of Brittany gave up his allies and made peace with the young King of France, Charles VI.

In 1434 Jean V. and the bishop, John of Malestroit, laid the foundations of the new cathedral of Nantes; and a few

years after the wicked Gilles de Rais was hung and burned on the Prés de Bièce, in Nantes.

But it was the reign of Duke Francis II. that was the glory of Nantes. The story of this prince and his favourite, Pierre Landais, is a romance. The brightest days of the duchy of Brittany preceded its extinction, for Anne, the daughter of Francis, was the last reigning duchess. At the time of the annexation to France, Nantes was almost the most important town in the kingdom. Her population even then was 40,000; it is now about 112,000, and her revenues amount to three millions. The plague often decimated her population, but for all that her commerce seemed perpetually to increase. Nantes, to her honour, refused to obey the orders of her governor, the Duke de Montpensier, at the massacre of St. Bartholomew; but in the war of the League she took the side of Mercœur against Henry IV. till peace was concluded, and the famous Edict signed, in 1598. At Nantes, in the time of Louis XIV., took place the sudden disgrace of Fouquet.

There has always been a sturdy resistance to tyranny in the people of Nantes. Once, when there was a revolt against an oppressive tax, the governor seized and imprisoned the wife of a carpenter who had been very prominent in the popular outcry. The people at once seized on the bishop, and kept him prisoner till the woman was released.

The saddest part of the prosperity of Nantes was that derived, even till the year 1790, from the immense slave-trade carried on from this port between the coast of Africa and the American colonies, from ten to twelve thousand slaves being taken yearly to the Antilles. Besides this its chief commerce was in linen cloth and in hats.

Nantes declared herself at once for the Republican movement in 1789, and she paid dearly for her impatience of authority. She tried to repress the Vendeean revolt under La Rochejaquelein, Cathélineau, "the saint of Anjou," as he has been called, and others; but the Royalists invested the city, and would probably have taken it but for the death of Cathélineau.

But before the city had time for congratulation on its deliverance from the hated aristocrats, it found itself divided by the intrigues of two parties, the Mountain and the Gironde, and was given up to the supreme government of the blood-thirsty monster Carrier. Then Nantes was flooded with blood, not only of the captive Vendeeans but of the wretched inhabitants. Besides the murders of the guillotine, thousands of innocent victims, women and little children, were shot in squadrons, and drowned in the infamous Noyades in the Loire. The river became so choked with corpses that it bred fever and death in the city. At last a young man, named Mark Antony Jullien, had the courage to denounce Carrier to the Committee of Public Safety, and the monster was recalled and executed in Paris.

Charrette, the Vendeean leader, was taken prisoner and shot in Nantes, 1796. The last important political event of Nantes was the well-known arrest, in 1832, of the Duchess de Berri, mother of the Count de Chambord; the last commercial event is the new port of St. Nazaire, and the rapid and upward progress of this little bathing village.

We came home along the quay, and passed the Place du Bouffay, the saddest spot in Brittany, for the guillotine stood here in the days of Carrier, and swam the city with blood, and until of late this Place was the place of public

executions. Here was fought, in 1386, the famous duel between Robert de Beaumanoir and Le Sieur de Tournemine; here Chalais died in the days of Louis XIII.; and here four Breton gentlemen perished for their share in the plot of Cellamare, among them the young and heroic Marquis de Pontecallec. The Palais du Bouffay stood formerly between this and the castle. It was a curious old building of the tenth century, built by Conan, Count of Rennes, when he conquered Nantes; and in the Grosse Tour du Bouffay "the abbot of St. Jean d'Angeli was found one morning dead, his head and face swollen as black as a coal and his tongue pulled two feet from his mouth," says the old chronicler Alain Bouchart.

There are some interesting old houses in the Rue de la Juiverie; north of the Place close by is the church of Ste. Croix, which was rebuilt in the seventeenth century on the ruins of a pagan temple. It has a round tower, on which the old belfry from the Tour du Bouffay has recently been placed.

From the Place du Bouffay we went a little way along the quay till we reached the famous line of bridges which extend more than a mile before they reach the farther bank of the Loire. The road between them has to traverse first the Ile Gloriette, on which are the Hôtel-Dieu and the Prairie de la Magdelaine, and then the expanse of meadows across which an arm of the river finds its way to the sea. Across this, and beyond the Pont de Pirnil, the last of the six bridges, is the great Hôpital général de St. Jacques. This hospital can furnish beds for one thousand six hundred patients, chiefly for those mentally afflicted, although it also receives others. The church of St. Jacques,

close by, is of the Transition period, badly restored in the fifteenth century.

Coming back from the bridges, we found the Quai Flessels and the Quai Brancas separated by a bridge, where the Erdre falls into the Loire. On the Quai Brancas we passed the Halle aux Grains, above which is the Public Library. This is truly excellent so far as regards its contents, but is much too small; for travellers who care for such treasures it contains some very valuable manuscripts.

A little way on is the Bourse. It has two façades ornamented with statues; but it is an uninteresting modern building. Near it is held the great Sunday flower-market of Nantes. Most of these quays are lined with houses and shops; those most frequented seem to be the quay near the Château and the Quai de la Fosse. This last is very full of life; it reaches from the Bourse to the extreme end of the town. We went up the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau —one of the nine streets made by Graslin, and leading from the Place which bears his name—and soon reached the Hôtel de France.

Near the Place Graslin, along the Rue Voltaire, is a curious old house called Château des Irlandais, with a pretty staircase tower; but we could not gain admittance, although it seemed as if the interior ought to be worth seeing.

Our guide at the castle had pointed out to us the Jardin des Plantes, and had told us it was better worth seeing than anything in Nantes. Perhaps he meant next to his beloved Chassepôts. He said we should go between two and three o'clock, as the band played then, and there was a promenade. But we could not get there

till this was over, though we took a carriage; for this garden is a very long walk from the Place Graslin, being some distance beyond the castle. Down the Rue St. Clément, which leads from the Place Louis Seize, are the two new churches of St. Clément and Notre Dame de la Sallette; but they are not equal to St. Nicholas. Most of the convents are in this street, and behind it, close to the Jardin des Plantes, is the cemetery of La Bouteillerie.

The gardens are most delightful. We entered through a screen of magnolias, and soon found a grand avenue of these beautiful trees covered with blossoms. The effect of this superb tree, with its broad satin-looking leaves with their hoary lining, and its large, delicious, creamy blossoms, growing on all sides in the open air, is very impressive. It is said that a plant of magnolia was first brought to Nantes from North America in 1711. At the end of twenty years it outgrew the conservatory in which it had been placed, and the gardener resolved to destroy it; but his wife, wishing to preserve the beautiful plant, placed it in the open ground where it had shelter from the north wind. It grew and prospered, and its offspring now adorn these interesting gardens.

One of the oldest magnolias is that at the end of the lime-walk. There are forty-eight magnolia-trees in the great avenue; but, besides these, we saw all kinds of tender plants blossoming freely out-of-doors—the exquisite blue-pencilled plumbago, the banana palm, and many others. There is water on every side, sometimes widening into a lake and sometimes a narrow stream, bordered by weeping willows and filled with rare flowering plants. Besides the flowers, which are abundant, there is a wealth of rare trees;

and the heat was so intense that we found the refreshing shade under some of these most grateful. These gardens are indeed a very enticing retreat.

On our way back we passed the Lycée and the Archæological Museum, crossed the Place Louis Seize, and went up the Rue Royale. At the top of this is the Préfecture, built by Ceineray in 1763: it has a fine staircase. Farther on is the Museum of Natural History, on the Place du Port Communeau, and a little to the south of this the Hôtel de Ville. There is nothing to see here but a little casket which once held the heart of Anne of Brittany. Close by the Hôtel de Ville is the Society of the Frères Chrétiens; and a little way on, at 8, Rue St. Jean, is a remarkable old house, called the house of the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul. The statue of this saint, at one of the corners, is modern. In the Rue St. Vincent, leading from the Place St. Jean, are some curious old houses. The Rue St. Leonard runs beside the Hôtel de Ville. At No. 23 in this street there is this inscription on a tablet on the wall: "Molière a joué la comédie dans ce jeu de paume."

We crossed the Erdre by the Pont de l'Ecluse so as to come out by the museum. We had not time to examine the collection of pictures, but it is said to be very good. Across the Place Bretagne the Rue Mercœur leads to the Palais de Justice; above the frieze is a group by Sue, a sculptor of Nantes, "Justice protecting Innocence against Crime." Here are the archives of Nantes, and among them are records of the fearful Reign of Terror. This entry seems almost incredible: "December 20, 1793.—Twenty-seven executions took place on the Place du

Bouffay; seven of them women." Among these were "four sisters," demoiselles de la Métairie, or, as they are styled in the record, "Gabrielle Métairie, aged 28; Marguerite, 27; Claire, 26; Olympe; and their faithful servant Jeanne Ray." Their accusation is the having been found "les armes à la main." The executioner hesitated to fulfil his office, and three days after died of remorse. "L'imbécile s'est laissé mourir de peur," said Carrier, with a laugh.

In front of the Palais de Justice is the statue of Billault, and from here the Rue Lafayette, a street built of stone houses, leads into the Rue Crébillon. It is a pity these streets are not wider, for the houses in them, built of stone of Saumur, are very handsome.

Across the Cours Cambronne, from the Place Graslin, with the marshal's statue in the centre, one reaches the Quai de la Fosse. It might be very pleasant here, with its magnolias and chestnut-trees, if it were not spoiled, as the other quays are along the Loire, by the line of railway. The effect must have been imposing; but this has been sacrificed to utility, and one wonders how the Nantais could have consented thus to injure the look of their city.

At No. 5, the beginning of the Quai de la Fosse, Maison des Tourelles, Henri Quatre signed, in 1598, the famous Edict of Nantes, which granted the same privileges to those of the reformed religion as to Roman Catholics, and which gave a great stimulus to trade. Its revocation in 1685 caused an insurrection in the city which occasioned much bloodshed. There are other old houses besides this one on the Quai de la Fosse, although the quay itself seems the centre of modern bustle and life. At its farthest western

extremity is an avenue of magnolias, with a sort of summer-house commanding a very extensive prospect; and close by is the Escalier Ste. Anne, leading to the avenue and church of that saint, also commanding a fine view. At the top of the staircase is a statue of St. Anne.

The view over the Loire, its islands, the city, and surrounding hills is very fine from this part of the town, and is quite worth driving to see, for Nantes is spread out so far eastward and westward that the little carriages which stand for hire near the Bourse and the river Erdre are very useful, and might with advantage be more frequently stationed about the town. Near Ste. Anne is the gloomy granite building called Les Salorges, from which the noyades took place.

There is a great deal still to see in the manufactories beside the Loire, the largest magazines of *conserves alimentaires* in Europe; but so much lies before the traveller who means to explore Brittany that I think he will not feel inclined at the outset of his journey to stay very long in Nantes. The Passage Pommeraye, which connects the Rue Crébillon with the Rue de la Fosse, is very curious. It has three arcades of shops, one above another, connected by an immense double iron staircase. One of the remarkable features of Nantes is its enormous tobacco manufactory, near the Paris railway station. At certain hours the streets near the factory are thronged with the great number of persons employed, who seem to be chiefly women.

A very interesting excursion to be made from Nantes for those who have time to spare is to Clisson, to which the railway now goes. As it is in La Vendée, and not in Brittany, we did not visit it; but its ruined castle, once the

residence of the famous Constable, is very picturesque and well-placed, and the country around it is interesting.

Not far from Clisson is the Château de la Seilleraye,

Castle of Clisson.

which Madame de Sévigné mentions in a letter to Madame de Grignan. This château was designed by Mansard, and the north side of the gardens was planned by Le Nôtre,

the famous creator of the gardens of Versailles. In this château there is a portrait of Madame de Sévigné. There are also the old châteaux of Chassay, near St. Luce station, and La Gâcherie, on the right bank of the Erdre, fifteenth century; there is also the château of Goulaine. La Gâcherie was the scene of the fêtes given by Réné de Rohan to his sister-in-law, Marguerite de Valois, Queen of Navarre, and sister of François I. This château has a grand old fireplace.

A pleasant excursion on the Erdre is by the little steamer to Nort, near which is the château of Lucinière; and last, but most interesting, the Château de Buron, about ten miles out of Nantes. The oldest portion of this château was built by the Duc de Rohan in 1385, and the rest is sixteenth century. The son of Madame de Sévigné sold it in 1700 to the Hersart family, who caused it to be restored by Ceineray. The room occupied by Madame de Sévigné is panelled in carved oak of the Louis Quatorze period.

The railway to St. Nazaire is bordered along the quay by magnolias and horse-chestnuts; but after this is past it is not interesting, except that just before reaching Donges we have on the right La Grande Brière, a most extraordinary kind of dry swamp, from which large quantities of bog oak are dug. It is said that all the trees discovered here lie one way, their roots to the south-west and their tops north-east. We looked out at Donges with interest, for it was here that Madame de Lescure, afterwards Madame de la Rochejaquelein, wandered about in disguise when she and her mother and child had to shelter themselves among the peasants after the final defeat of the Royalist army.

It was getting dusk when we reached St. Nazaire, so we did not see the dolmen just outside the town. We heard that the inns were full, and we were anxious to secure a carriage for our expedition to Le Croisic next morning.

Pornic, the scene of "Fifine at the Fair," &c., is the favourite bathing-place of the Nantais; but it is in La Vendée, not in Brittany.

THE PENINSULA OF LE CROISIC.

CHAPTER II.

La Guérande. Le Croisic.
Le Bourg de Batz. Le Pouliguen.

WE started early for Le Croisic, having arranged to go first to La Guérande to breakfast. It was a singularly bright morning, and our little horse went along briskly. We asked our driver to stop at Escoublac, as we had heard the strange legend belonging to it, and he pulled up at the wretched little cabaret. It is a dreary-looking village, about two miles from the sea, surrounded by flat meadows and backed by a range of sand-hills. It once stood much nearer the sea, but the old village of Escoublac has been completely swallowed by the sand. Even now clouds of sand blow over the present village from the sandy dunes which lie between it and the sea. The story of its disappearance is told as an established fact.

Once upon a time a venerable old man with a long white beard, and a young, pleasant-faced woman, came begging to Escoublac. They were in rags, and they seemed poorer than the poorest peasant that had ever been seen in the country. They asked for food and a night's lodging; but so hard-hearted and niggardly were these inhabitants of Escoublac

that no one gave the old man and the woman so much as a draught of cold water.

Now, as is well known through the length and breadth of the land, hospitality is considered in Brittany as a sacred duty, and the beggar is regarded as one of God's afflicted, and is given the warmest corner by the fire, and often the most savoury morsel in the pot.

At last, when the venerable old man and the pleasant-faced woman had reached the end of the village, and had found every door closed against them, they stood still. The woman clasped her hands in supplication, and seemed to weep; but the old man turned away with an indignant gesture, pulled three hairs from his beard, and blew them towards the sea; then he and the woman flew towards the clouds, and were soon out of sight.

Almost at once there blew such a gale from the west as had never been felt at Escoublac. It rained thick clouds of sand, which spread over the doomed village, and by next morning there remained no trace of it or its inhabitants but the cock on the summit of the church spire, which being so much higher than the houses had not been swallowed up; and this spire remained for some years above ground.

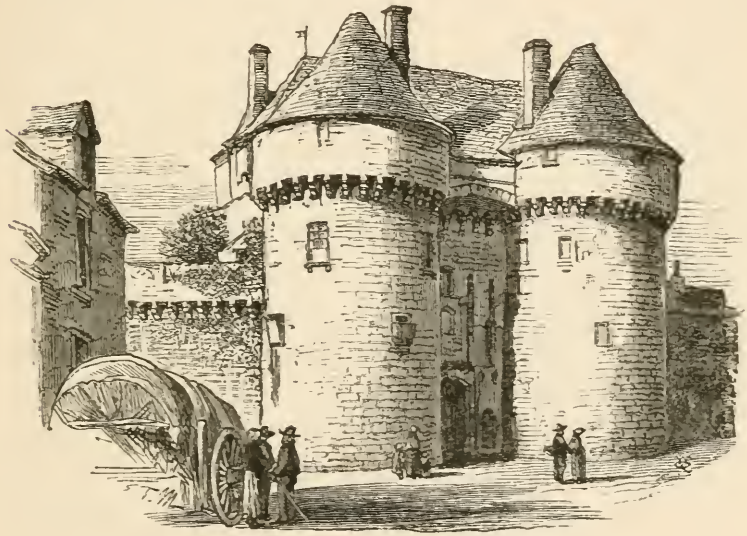
It has always been believed that God the Father and the Blessed Mary, having heard of the want of charity among the inhabitants of Escoublac, came down to punish them in person.

The old château of Escoublac is called Lesnerac; it is now all modern, except a tower and some of the windows.

A tall blind beggar stood by the little cabaret where we halted. He said a long prayer for us, and wished us pleasure and success in our travels. We put some sous in his greasy

old cap, and he then began a much longer prayer, which we did not hear the end of, as we went to look at the little church. After leaving Escoublac we began to see salt-marshes spread over the country, and soon in the distance appeared the grey walls of La Guérande.

We passed one or two châteaux, and drove into the Faubourg St. Michel, a long straggling street with houses on both sides. At the end of this we saw before us a very



Entrance Gateway.

picturesque old gateway flanked by two machicolated towers with pointed caps, and overgrown in places with ivy and creeping plants. This is the Porte St. Michel, and over the low-browed circular-headed entrance are carved the arms of Guérande, and right and left of the gateway are fortifications and boulevards, shaded with elms and poplar-trees.

We drove straight to the quaint inn in the middle of this

charming little town. In spite of some attempts at modern improvements, Guérande seems to have stood still since the Middle Ages. The old grey walls, which surround it in a sort of oval, are perfect, and are pierced by four gates, facing north, south, east, and west. The Portes St. Michel and Vannetaise have towers, those called Bezierne and Le Saillé have only loop-holes. There were once ten towers on the walls of La Guérande, and nearly all of them remain. Inside the town there seem to be plenty of quaint old houses, surrounded by their gardens.

While our breakfast was getting ready we went on to the church. It is a fine, impressive building. The older portion of the nave, which has not been restored, has a wooden roof, with quaintly carved tie-beams. The carving on each is different. The sculptured capitals of the nave are very remarkable, and are also all different; the massive piers are green with age; but the stained glass is modern and quite unworthy of the church. Near the western doorway an external pulpit is built in the thickness of the buttress.

We went on beyond the little inn, past old houses with vines clinging against and hiding the offending whitewash which spoils them here and there, till we came to a smaller church, the Chapelle de Notre Dame de la Blanche. The interior is very good. It was built by John de Montfort in 1348, and turned into a barn at the Revolution; but it has been restored within the last twenty years, and is a very interesting relic.

After breakfast we went through the Porte de Saillé, and mounting some steps found ourselves outside the walls on a delightful walled rampart planted with a double row of trees, and commanding an extensive view. The country appears

to swarm with windmills. On one side are the sand-hills of Escoublac, and farther on are the salt-marshes of Le Bourg de Batz and of Le Croisic glittering in the sunshine. The salt heaps from here looked like prodigious white anthills. In the distance was the sea.

We walked along the rampart some way round the

Part of Walls and Gateway, La Guérande.

town under the shade of the trees, but we soon left off looking at the distant country, cut up into squares by the salt-pans. The beautiful old machicolated walls of Guérande were a far more interesting study. Their grey is delightful in colour, hoary with white and silver-green lichen, and in many parts they are wonderfully preserved. The gates and towers are very picturesque,

overgrown with ivy and wild flowers. The ancient moat still surrounds a great part of the walls, but it is stagnant and covered with duckweed varied with tufts of rushes. Here and there a row of poplar-trees is planted against the old grey walls, but everywhere the ivy and honeysuckle are paramount, while bluebells and other delicate flowers have niched themselves in among the stones, and give a change of colour.

These walls were built by Duke John V. in 1431, out of the city tolls. There is nothing like them all through Brittany; indeed, La Guérande is thoroughly original and unlike any other town. It was called by the Romans Aula Guiriaca, and by the Bretons Werrann, or Guer-rann, perhaps from Guerech I., Count of Vannes, who often inhabited the town. Lewis of Spain took Guérande by assault in 1342, when five churches were destroyed and 8,000 of the inhabitants were murdered. The articles of peace which settled the War of Succession were signed at Guérande, in 1380, because it was near the sea, as it was the season of Lent, "pour avoir du bon poisson pour le carême." In 1386 John IV. married, in the church of St. Clair de Saillé, Joan of Navarre, afterwards the wife of Henry IV. (Bolingbroke). Guérande was also taken by Du Guesclin in 1373.

Our landlady at the inn reproached us for having come on a week-day, and indeed we had planned to go there on Sunday.

"Ah!" she said, "it is on Sunday that you would see dresses. You would see our people and the salt-workers from the Bourg de Batz and from Le Saillé. There are no people like them in the world."

We very much regretted that we had not followed her

advice, for neither the farming population of La Guérande and its outskirts, nor the paludiers, as the salt-workers are called, of Le Bourg de Batz and Le Saillé, wear their costume on working days, and as Pardons and rural fêtes seem unknown here Sunday is the great opportunity for display of costume. It is strange that living so close together in this little peninsula the men and women of these races should never intermarry. The men and women of Batz are a very handsome and exclusive people, quite unlike any other in Brittany, with special habits and customs, and with evidently a great contempt for the more peaceful *métayers* of La Guérande.

The road to Batz is very even and monotonous. The salt-marshes spread out towards the sea, divided into squares, with narrow ledges between just wide enough to hold the bare feet of the paludières, whom we saw paddling in the *œillets* with their long-handled shovels. They seemed to be chiefly women, and looked very picturesque with their bare legs and green-black skirts and curious white caps and aprons. Everywhere, at certain intervals, were huge conical salt-heaps, covered over with earth to preserve the salt from injury.

In the midst of our observations we felt a sudden shock —down went the side of our comfortable little carriage— one of the hind wheels spun across the path, and left us in an immovable slant at the side of the road.

Our driver, of course, swore and gesticulated and stamped furiously, and would have continued the performance, but we told him we were determined to go on to Le Croisic, and that he had better ride back to Guérande and get another vehicle. He then said he knew the axle was cracked

when we started from St. Nazaire, but he thought it would have lasted the day; and then he began again to curse and kick a stone in the road which he said had caused the disaster.

At last we persuaded him to give this up and go back to Guérande; but at parting he advised us not to be too hopeful.

"It is possible I cannot get another vehicle, and in that case—" He left off with a serious shake of his great head.

"And in that case?" we asked anxiously.

He shook his head again, stuck his heels into the horse's sides, and rode back to Guérande.

Our situation was not cheerful. The hedges on either side were too high to permit a view over the country, and even if we could have seen over them there is little variety in these interminable salt-marshes, with here and there a woman or man disturbing the water in the salt-pans, or scraping a sort of white scum to the edge. There was not so much as a cow to look at; and, besides this absence of interest, the road was white and straight and dusty, and the sun was blazing fiercely down on our heads.

We felt greatly comforted when an old woman with a basket on her head came in sight. She stopped at once when she saw our disaster, and loudly expressed her sympathy. She was the most talkative Breton woman we had as yet met with, and she was very inquisitive. She was carrying fruit to Le Croisic, she said, and she took her basket off her head, and placed it on the ground beside her.

We asked if we could have some of the fruit. "Oh yes! we could have it. She had meant it for Le Croisic; but to refresh distressed travellers, oh yes!" She opened her

stores, and displayed some very small gooseberries and some small yellow plums. They were not very good, but still they were a welcome refreshment.

We asked our friend how much we had to pay. At first she declined to make a charge. It was of no consequence, she said; then, "What monsieur and madame please." And finally she asked about three times as much as we should have paid at Nantes or Angers, and went off satisfied that she had conferred a favour on unfortunate travellers.

At last, after a long waiting, a cumbrous hooded vehicle came in sight, with our driver and two rough companions.

He informed us that this was the only carriage to be got in La Guérande, and that we might think ourselves very fortunate to get it. It was very uncomfortable, quite unlike our trim, easy-going basket-carriage—indeed it bumped terribly; fortunately the road was level. As we went along we saw maize or corn being threshed by a machine drawn by horses, as in Spain.

There were plenty of women at work in the salt-pans, skimming the salt off the water with their long wooden scrapers, putting the salt into basins and from them on to the heaps. We soon drove into the Bourg de Batz, a most ordinary-looking village surrounded by salt-pans, with huge salt-heaps taking the place of hay-stacks at the angle of the enclosures round the cottages. The women looked tall and well-made, and their head-dress was rather peculiar than picturesque—a roll of hair in front, round which was twisted narrow white tape, and the cap placed above, with straight sides swathing the face.

We saw very few men, and these wore snowy white smocks, trousers, and gaiters buttoned with very small buttons from

the ankle to the knee. We only met one man with white bragous bras, and with a large black hat, like the hats of Quimper and the rest of Lower Brittany. The brilliant white of this costume gives an air of cleanness and refinement that contrasts strangely with the poor-looking granite houses. We drove on to Le Croisic, through the salt-marshes. These perpetual long squares into which the country is divided give a dull monotonous effect; but before us, and indeed

Le Croisic.

all round us, we could see the sea, and very soon we reached Le Croisic.

At first sight it looks a dull little fishing-village. The port is completely enclosed by small islands, and a long artificial promontory or causeway, called the Chaussée de Pembron, built to preserve the salt-marshes from the inroads of the sea, for there seems to be little doubt that the whole of the peninsula, including Le Croisic, Batz, and Le Pouliguen, was at one time an island, and that by degrees the channel between it and the mainland has transformed itself into salt-marshes. There are plenty of fishing-boats and

stalwart-looking fishermen; but, following the straggling line of granite houses which surrounds the bay, we remarked that many of them were very curious, and almost all were very ancient in appearance. Farther on is some higher ground, grassed sand-hills with furze and broom at intervals, and shaded by trees, and from this, at some distance, we saw the pier stretching out into the sea. Near the pier is the Etablissement des Bains and the hotel.

A very picturesque old beggar, with an immense rusty black hat and long hair streaming over his shoulders, was sitting asleep under a furze-bush; under another a woman was mending an old pair of red trousers.

The Pointe du Croisic is about half a mile beyond the bathing-place, and from this point the coast is really interesting; the rocks become higher and take fantastic shapes—sometimes isolated, as one sees them at Etretat (that charming Norman town by the sea), and then again hollowed out by the force of the waves into grottos, in which, at high tide, the sea plunges with a deafening roar. Farther on the rocks stretch out in a point named Grand Autel; and not far beyond this is the Trou du Kourican, a deep hollow said to have been inhabited by a race of dwarfs. Farther on still is a little cove called Sable Menu, a capital bathing-place for those who prefer to dispense with cabins.

It is a long way to Grand Autel, and it is much better to drive on to the Etablissement before beginning to explore the coast, instead of alighting in the town, for there is little to see in Le Croisic itself, though it is a good plan to stay a few days there, so as to see something of the very original inhabitants of this peninsula.

The church Notre Dame de la Pitié is not remarkable.

Another chapel, St. Goustan, is now closed, but the women of Croisic still pray there for those at sea. From the Mont Esprit, at the end of a promenade called Le Mail, there is an excellent view of the town and harbour of Le Croisic: the town surrounded by the sandy waste of salt pans, and

Salt-sellers (Bourg de Batz).

rising from these the church towers of Batz and of La Guérande. Beyond the harbour is the Atlantic; there is a fine sea-view from Mont Lenigo. The population seems to be partly composed of fishermen and partly of salt-workers; but there is here, as well as in the Bourg de Batz, a certain separateness and exclusiveness both of costume and ideas.

The people of Le Croisic call themselves Croisicais, in contradistinction to Bretons, but they do not seem so fine a race as the people of the Bourg de Batz. Alain Bouchart, the historian, was born at Le Croisic; and in the fifteenth century this town seems to have been rich and prosperous, the centre of the salt-trade.

We stopped at Bourg de Batz, as we drove home, to look at some ruins near the church. These are very interesting, of late fifteenth century. They are part of a church dedicated to Notre Dame du Mûrier. From these ruins we went into the church. On the steps a group of young girls met us, and asked with an air of mystery if we wished to see a bride in her marriage dress. We said yes, eagerly, for we had heard that these wedding clothes of the Bourg de Batz were quite a thing to see.

"Then if Messieurs and Madame will go and see the church first, the bride will be ready when they come out."

The church is uninteresting, the end of the chancel deviating to the right so as quite to spoil the effect. I believe our impatience to see the marriage dress rather hurried our examination of the building. When we came out the eldest of the girls had disappeared, but the other three grinned and showed their white teeth as they ran on in front to guide us.

They had turned out of the main street rather beyond the church, and presently they stopped at the door of a little one-storied house. The doorway was so low that both my companions had to stoop considerably as they stepped down into the room within. Standing in the middle of the floor, radiant with delight at her own appearance, and, as one of my companions observed, in the anticipation of francs,

was the black-eyed damsel who had invited us to see the bride; but, before we could look at her, she darted up to a little cracked looking-glass set on an armoire, to see if her cap was straight. Then she walked with an air of great importance into the middle of the floor, smoothing out her splendid golden apron with both thumbs, and informing us with much excitement that the costume was as old as her grandmother, and had been worn by her own mother at her wedding.

The dress was very rich, both in colour and material. The skirt and body were of plum-coloured cloth, trimmed at the bottom of the skirt and round the armholes with broad black ribbon velvet; the sleeves were red; but the glory of the costume was the brilliant yellow apron and bib, or plastron, as it is called, of rich watered silk. The bib covered the chest, and was stiffened and quilted as if it was meant for armour. The apron-skirt was very wide and long, covering quite three-quarters of the gown, and reaching to its hem. On her head was a white cap made of lace, in shape like the ordinary Batz cap, and outside this was a wreath of white flowers.

Before we had finished looking at the dress she held up one of her feet that we might inspect her scarlet knitted stockings, with prodigious and elaborate clocks of green and white. Her shoes were violet, and round her waist she wore a white ribbon sash trimmed with silver lace. But the effect of the whole costume was spoiled by the girl's dirty greasy face and hands. She looked like a sweep on May-day. We should have liked better to see the clothes without her impersonation of the character.

"Shall you wear this dress when you marry?" we asked.

She shook her head. "No; it is the old fashion, and that is passing away. Our brides wear a small apron now, brown, or black, or violet; and they do not wear a stiff plastron; and it is more elegant to wear a white shawl which comes below the waist."

So the ancient marriage costume of the Bourg de Batz will soon be forgotten; and when the projected railway is opened between St. Nazaire and Le Croisic doubtless the primitive and isolated character of the people will also be somewhat changed.

One of our party was asked to put on the bridegroom's dress—white baggy trousers reaching to the knee, and, meeting these, white stockings fastened by ribbons with long ends; two long white flannel waistcoats bound with black velvet; a long brown jacket, with closely set rows of buttons, and a large square falling white collar. The chief feature of this dress was the enormous three-cornered black hat, once a characteristic part of the costume of the paludiers. It is now rarely seen on any but the old men. Formerly the way in which it was worn was significant of the state of the wearer; a bachelor wore the point over his ear, a married man wore it behind, and a widower in front. Sometimes these hats were trimmed with coloured worsted fringe. They are eminently picturesque, and must have had a charming effect worn with the snow-white linen costume of the paludier.

In one corner of the room was a bridal bedstead with gaily trimmed green hangings. On this mattresses and pillows were piled nearly to the top, this being a sign of opulence in a Breton household; for formerly the paludiers of Le Croisic were rich, and had some reason for the

exclusiveness with which they kept themselves apart from the ordinary Breton peasant. They are still very superior in cleanliness, and many of them are better grown and handsomer; but one does not see in their houses the rich furniture one has heard of, and there is both here and at Le Croisic an air of desolation.

The glory of this peninsula has departed since the imposition of the salt-tax, for salt-making and the cod-fishery are the sole occupations of the people of Batz and of Le Croisic. The landowners take three parts of the profits reaped on the salt-pans, and the poor paludiers get only a quarter. But their work does not seem hard. The sun and air are the chief agents in the evaporation of the water, which, however, has to pass from one set of pans to another through little subterraneous channels before it is allowed to reach the *œillets*, as the squares are called, from whence the salt is finally taken to be stored into the conical heaps one sees spread over the country.

We drove home by Le Pouliguen, a much shorter and prettier road than that by Guérande—the road on each side bordered by long stretches of sand-hills grown over by a kind of dwarf pine covered with fir-apples. Farther on were vineyards, and as the road rose these were planted in terraces one above another.

Le Pouliguen is a pretty little place, with a bay of silver-white sand. The bathing here is excellent; and as it is a cheaper and less known place than Le Croisic, it is much sought after by quiet economical Bretons. The hotel is small, but lodgings can be had close to the sea. There is a fine view over the mouth of the Loire, and in the distance can be seen the Pointe de St. Gildas in La Vendée, and the isle of

Noirmoutiers, the island to which St. Philibert, the founder of Jumieges, was banished by the malice of the Maire du Palais Ebroin. Philibert founded a monastery and died there.

We felt more inclined to stay at Pouliguen than to return to St. Nazaire, for there is too much seaport element in St. Nazaire to make it a desirable bathing-place.

In 1637, Gaston d'Orléans begged from Louis XIII. a few days' respite from his marriage with Mademoiselle, in order that he might visit the Pierre Percée near St. Nazaire. This pierced rock stands on an islet at the mouth of the Bay of Pouliguen. Here the prince and his friends amused themselves by shooting seabirds by hundreds. They then went on to another village, called "Le Croysil," by land. One of the prince's companions seems to have been much surprised at the amount of furnishings in the bedroom supplied to Gaston at Le Croisic: "100 brass candlesticks, 30 or 40 embroidered cushions," and so on, with other things. "I asked the hostess the meaning of this abundance. 'It is the custom of the country,' she said; 'those who are wealthy are always thus furnished.'" Near Pouliguen is the old Château de Careil. *Poul-guenn* means "white bay."

There is, however, a pretty little bay on the right of St. Nazaire, and next morning we walked along the dunes which overlook this till we reached the bathing-place. There is fine smooth sand here, and the bathing is good and safe —not always the case on the rock-bound coast of Brittany. A pretty view of the town is to be had beyond an intervening group of trees; but it is rather a long walk back to the hotel.

There seems to be a comfortable little inn, Hôtel de la Marine, close to the basin where the steamers arrive from

Nantes. Although St. Nazaire is a very ancient town, there is actually nothing to see except the harbour. It is really the port of Nantes, and is interesting as the point of embarkation for Mexico, the Antilles, and Spain. Near the railway station is a huge dolmen, the largest in the department. Several bronzes and gold pieces have been dug out beneath this huge monument. During the Wars of the League, the Royalists, commanded by La Tremblaye, took the town, and, cutting off the governor's head, sent it to the Prince of Dombes at Rennes.

It is certainly better to arrive from Nantes by steamer, if the journey to Vannes is to be made by railway from St. Nazaire, because as far as Savenay one has to retrograde and take the train thence to Redon. It is a roundabout journey with two stoppages.

MORBIHAN.

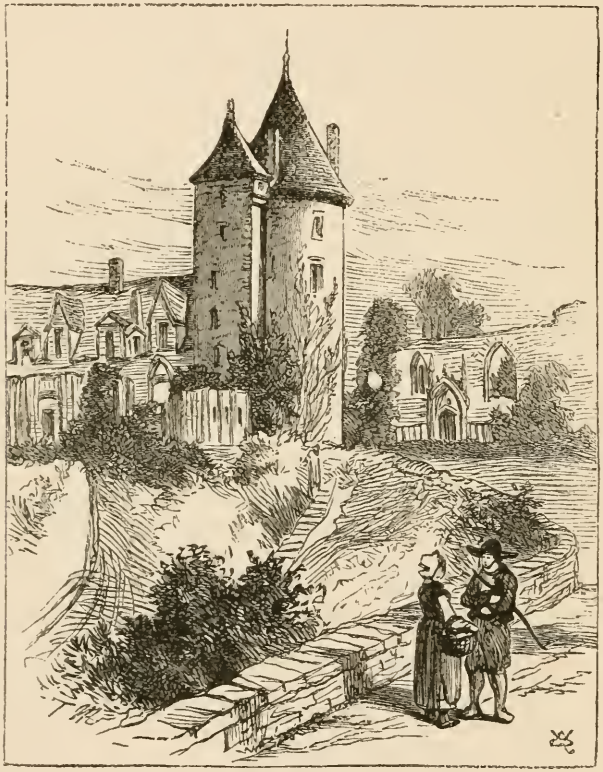
CHAPTER III.

La Roche Bernard.
Blain.
Redon.
Rochefort.
Lande of Lanvaux.

A PLEASANTER way of reaching Vannes is to drive from La Guérande to La Roche Bernard, a pretty little town with some quaint old houses charmingly placed on the river Vilaine. Its great feature is its lofty suspension bridge, 197 metres long and 33 metres above high-water mark. Between La Roche Bernard and Pontchâteau is the Château de la Bretesche and its forest, which served as a refuge to the Protestants of La Roche Bernard, and their minister, Louveau, in 1570 and 1590. An omnibus runs between La Roche Bernard and Pontchâteau station, on the Vannes line between Savenay and Redon.

Pontchâteau seems a pretty little place. Magnolias, catalpas, and sumac-trees are abundant. There is a fine menhir near Pontchâteau, called le Fuseau de la Madelaine, and at some distance from it is the famous Château de Blain, said to have been founded by Alain Fergent, though some of it is much later. All that now remains are two towers, a portion of the dwelling-house, a ruined chapel, and some

of the walls. There were once nine towers; of those now remaining, one is attributed to Alain Fergent, and to the other the ever-present Clisson has left his name; it is called La Tour du Connétable—Blain having come by marriage into the family of Clisson. His daughter Beatrix carried this



Château de Blain.

property into the House of Rohan when she married, and it remained in the possession of the Rohans till 1802. It is a very fine ruin. Four sisters de l'instruction Chrétienne got out at this station of St. Gildas. The community now occupies the old Benedictine Abbey of St. Gildas des Bois.

The church here, although not so old as the first foundation of the abbey, is still a remarkable specimen of thirteenth-century architecture. The convent buildings are of much later date. The abbot of St. Gildas des Bois was the only one who had a right to use a crozier and mitre in the diocese of Nantes.

We had now pine-woods on each side of the railway and just before we reached Redon the country opened into a long stretch of wooded hills with bits of blue distance seen here and there. Redon stands at the angle of the three departments, Ille et Vilaine, Loire Inférieure, and Morbihan. It is quite worth while to stop here to see the grand old church of St. Sauveur, which forms a striking object from the railway station. The central tower is very ancient and remarkable; the transept is as old as the twelfth century; and there are traces of Norman work in this fine old church. There are several interesting monuments, and the cumbrous high altar was the gift of Cardinal Richelieu, who was Abbé of Redon.

The town of Redon really owes its origin to the abbey, which was founded as early as 832 by Nomenoë. The abbey buildings, which are now occupied as a college, are not earlier than the seventeenth century. There are some old gabled houses in the Grande Rue.

After we left Redon the pine-trees disappeared, the edges of the railway banks were purple with heather, and above were chestnut-trees. As we got nearer Vannes the country was pretty and English looking, though here and there groves of firs and stretches of brown moorland reminded us of the Border. Hitherto, except in the salt works and the costume in the peninsula of Le Croisic, and the caps and kerchiefs

of Nantes, we had not noticed any very special features in Brittany; but here came a change in the scenery. The fields, instead of being divided by hedges, were fenced by fragments of granite fastened together by wattles.

About half-way between Redon and Vannes is the station of Malansac, and from here there is a correspondence to Rochefort-en-terre. This old lordship passed, in 1349, by marriage, from the house of Rochefort to the house of Rieux. There are still some towers standing of the old castle. The church has been restored and altered out of all interest, but the town is full of quaint old houses and steep streets. The town is well placed, and from the castle the view is very picturesque.

It is better to take a carriage at Rochefort to accomplish the expedition to the lande of Lanvaux and its neighbourhood, described by Monsieur Fouquet in his useful little book, "Guide des Touristes et des Archéologues dans le Morbihan." The menhirs here are said to be flung about promiscuously; they are very numerous, and with the curious dolmens are worth seeing, forming a kind of fitting entry to the dreary Morbihan country, with its long stretches of barren moor and its awful Druidic monuments. The menhir called the Chapeau Rouge stands close to the road leading to Malestroit, and near the village of Carhon is an enormous dolmen, or grotto, 42 feet long; but the place is reported to be full of interest for students of archæology, so many of these curious remains being still said to exist on the wild plains of Lanvaux. The following legend is told to account for the immense stretch of dreary waste which reaches westward from above Rochefort to Plaudren and its neighbourhood.

THE LEGEND OF THE LANDE OF LANVAUX.

Once on a time this huge desolate waste had more villages on it than any other of the plains to the north of Vannes, and just where now exists the gloomy pond of Coëtdelo stood a pretty smiling village surrounded by fields and orchards.

It so happened that St. Peter and St. Paul were travelling through the world to see what was doing, and they reached this village in a pouring rain which had drenched them to the skin. They were poorly clothed, and carried wallets on their shoulders to hold the crusts they begged as they went along, and sticks in their hands to keep off dogs.

The two saints knocked first at the door of the finest house in the village, and asked leave to dry themselves by the kitchen fire. Now it happened that Mr. Richard, the owner of the house, who was both dishonest and uncharitable, opened the door himself. As soon as he saw the saints, thinking them beggars, he threatened that if they did not instantly decamp he would set his dog on them. At this the poor saints were so greatly terrified that they ran away to the other end of the village, and this time they knocked at the door of the poorest hovel in the place, and asked for shelter.

This was the hut of Gaffer Misery, who, seeing his visitors wet through and shivering, welcomed them kindly. "Sit down, good friends," he said, "rest yourselves and dry your clothes," and then he set light to a bit of charred wood which he had picked up that morning, and offered them a drink of sour milk. For food he could only give them some crusts of black bread which he had himself

begged that morning, for poor Misery was old and infirm, and no longer able to work for his living.

When the charred log had burned out, and the bread was all eaten, St. Peter said to Misery—

"Thou art a good man. Thou hast given us all that thou hast received, and thy charity is real, for it was given for the love of God. May thy faith equal thy charity. Wish, and thy desire shall be granted."

At these words Misery recognised the presence of saints. He fell on his knees before them.

"I have only one possession, Blessednesses," he said, "and that is an apple-tree; but every year I am robbed of its fruit while I go out begging. Grant me, then, that whosoever shall climb my apple-tree shall have no power to descend from it without my leave. In this way I shall discover the thief, and your Blessednesses will have done for me a thousandfold more than I have done for you."

"Thy wish is granted," said the saint, and St. Peter and St. Paul vanished from the sight of the beggar.

Next autumn Misery's apple-tree was laden with fine fruit. "Aha!" he thought; "I shall for once eat these nice apples myself."

One morning he came out of his hut, and looking up at the tree to see if the fruit were ripe enough to gather, he saw the leaves shaking violently, and behold! there was Mr. Richard among the branches, making vain efforts to descend.

"How now!" exclaimed Misery; "it is you, is it, Mr. Richard, you who have plenty, who steal the goods of the poor? However, all the parish shall learn that you are a thief. Stay where you are, my fine gentleman!"

And Misery ran off and summoned all the villagers, without paying heed to the rich man's cries for help.

The neighbours came trooping up, nothing loth, and laughed and cried shame loudly on Mr. Richard, who was detested both for his avarice and his churlish ways.

Mr. Richard, overcome with shame, implored Misery to help him out of the tree.

"I will pay you the value of all the fruit I have ever taken," he said, "and a fat sum besides."

But Misery shook his head and left him struggling in the tree till nightfall. Then he went and released the culprit.

"Take care, Mr. Richard," he said, "I let you off scot free this time, but don't try to steal my apples again; if you do you will have to stay up in the tree."

Mr. Richard scrambled down in such a hurry that he nearly broke his neck: but he took Misery's advice and left the apple-tree alone.

At last Misery became very ill. All at once Death appeared to him, and said in a loud voice, "Come along, Misery, you must follow me. Are you ready?"

"My good friend," said the beggar, "you must know that I am always ready to follow you, for I have nothing to take out of the world and nothing to leave in it. Still, no soul ever yet quitted life without one lingering wish, and I ask one last service of you. You are so kind-hearted that you will not refuse me, especially as it will cost you little trouble and time to render it. Close to my door is a beautiful apple-tree laden with fruit just ready for eating; now before I die I wish to eat one of these apples, and I ask you to be so good as to fetch me a nice one."

"Is that all?" said Death. "For once in a way I

should like to make myself agreeable, and to you more than to any one else, my poor Misery."

So Death hurried off and climbed the apple-tree. But when he tried to come down it was another matter. There he stuck fast. He strove to break down the tree; he begged, he howled, he raved, he struggled. All in vain; even Death was obliged to submit to a power stronger than his own.

He called loudly on Misery, but Misery was deaf.

"Ah, my friend," said Death, "let me go; I have so much in hand that I have not a minute to spare."

"That is all very well," said Misery; "you may be in a hurry to depart, but I am not."

"But," said Death, "I swear to let you off this time, and if you release me I will leave you in peace for ten years."

"Ten years! I want to live till the Last Judgment. Grant that, and you may come down."

"Have your way, Misery. You shall exist till the end of all things."

And Death sprang furiously from the apple-tree, his scythe in his hand; and in his rage he mowed down men, houses, and trees—only Misery remained on the desolate waste.

There is very much of interest in the neighbourhood of both Rochefort and Redon, and they can both be reached easily from Vannes. Indeed, the whole of Morbihan teems with interest, and although much has been done of late years in the way of research, owing to the presence of many distinguished local archæologists, still one feels that much still lies buried and perhaps unnoticed in this weird, marvellous country.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER IV.

VANNES.

A FEELING of intense interest grows and deepens as one really enters this strange weird province, and it is scarcely possible that the earnest and diligent traveller will be disappointed in his investigations, though Brittany is a land to which the old story of "Eyes and No Eyes" applies far more than to Normandy, and one is painfully conscious how much escapes even very intent research. But even those who prefer mere holiday cannot travel in Morbihan without becoming fascinated by the strange mysterious power of these weird misshapen stones scattered over it, and will soon cease to wonder at the awe with which the peasants regard them. The whole department is full of interest, and also full of practical teaching for the archæologist; while those who only aim at acquiring a taste instead of science in such researches, will not only learn much without any effort of their own but will feel inspired to study this most interesting lore.

The caps of the women at Vannes station looked charming, and entirely different from any we had seen, but the

faces beneath them were not attractive—they were gloomy and serious. No one seemed to be in good spirits, and although many both of men and women had good dark eyes and regular features their first aspect was decidedly depressing. The women appeared cowed and silent, without any of the French gaiety we had seen so much of at Chartres and Le Mans, and the men looked surly, and gave short sullen answers; but as we got into the town our first impression of it was very pleasant. We had been led to expect a dirty town with narrow twisted streets, in which there was not much to reward the trouble of those in search of picturesque antiquities, and in which it would not be pleasant to lodge; but when we reached the inn we had selected on the fresh open Place Napoléon, we found that at least there were air and cleanliness to be found in Vannes; and when we began to penetrate the streets of the old walled town, we found, too, how very interesting it is.

This old walled part is by far the smallest portion of the city, which has spread round it on all sides; but the cathedral, the shops, and the Mairie are within the quaint, ancient walls, which may be traced all round the old town, and which, though often built up by houses, retain their machicolations, and present continually the most charming little bits to the artist. Some of these walls are of the Gallo-Roman period, and others are of various periods from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. The old gate called Porte Prison, or Porte Pater, from St. Paterne or Pater, is the most interesting and curious of the remaining gates. The streets twist and wind so much that it is not easy at first to find one's way directly from one point to another.

We went down the Rue de la Préfecture on our way to the cathedral, stopping at the late Monsieur Galle's Library as we passed, and getting a talk with its courteous mistress.

The old stone houses are very quaint. Each story so projects over that below that where one street runs at an angle from another the corners of the eaves almost touch. This is especially to be seen in the Place Henri Quatre, at the end of the Rue de la Préfecture. There are many curious old houses here, notably the block at the corner of the Rue des Chanoines. We went down this street, beside the now ruined cloisters of the cathedral. There is not much to remark in the exterior of this building except the ugliness of the spire.

The cathedral is dedicated to St. Peter, but St. Clair is said to have been the first missionary to Vannes. He appeared in Morbihan in the third century. St. Clair died in 280, in the reign of Probus, after converting to Christianity the military labourers employed by this emperor in replanting the Gallic vineyards torn up by the orders of Domitian. These converts placed under the protection of the reigning Pope, St. Cornély, the cattle which they employed during their labours. This is said to be the origin of the special worship of St. Cornély throughout Brittany. St. Patern II., elected by the voice of the people Bishop of Vannes in 575, is said to have taken possession of a magnificent public building in the heart of the city, hitherto used for public assemblies at pagan rites, and, having purified it, he consecrated it for Christian worship. It is therefore probable that this Gallo-Roman building was used as the church till Vannes was pillaged by the Northmen in the tenth century.

The cathedral now existing is supposed to have been begun in the eleventh century. It contains specimens of the architecture of almost all the centuries between the eleventh and the eighteenth. It consists of a nave, with five chapels on each side; of these the largest is the chapel of St. Vincent. Old documents prove that the first cathedral closely resembled in construction the abbey church of St. Gildas de Rhuys. The nave seems to have been sixty years in building; and in the sixteenth century the Italian Archdeacon Danielo built the chapel of the Saint Sacrement, which is also called the Chapel of the Pardon. This is round, and is far more curious than admirable. John Danielo, its founder, was buried here in 1540.

The chapel of St. Vincent Ferrier is of the seventeenth century. The possession of the relics of this saint is the great glory of Vannes. Duke John V. persuaded the Spanish Dominican monk to take up his abode at Vannes in 1417, and, though he only lived two years in Brittany, he seems to have evangelised the whole country. He was buried in the cathedral of Vannes; and when the Duchess Jeanne died, she was, at her own request, buried at the feet of St. Vincent. He was canonised in 1456 at the earnest supplication of the duke and all his people, and his relics are still carried in procession through the town on the first Sunday in September, as a commemoration of their preservation to the town of Vannes, for Philip II. of Spain tried to get possession of them at the end of the next century.

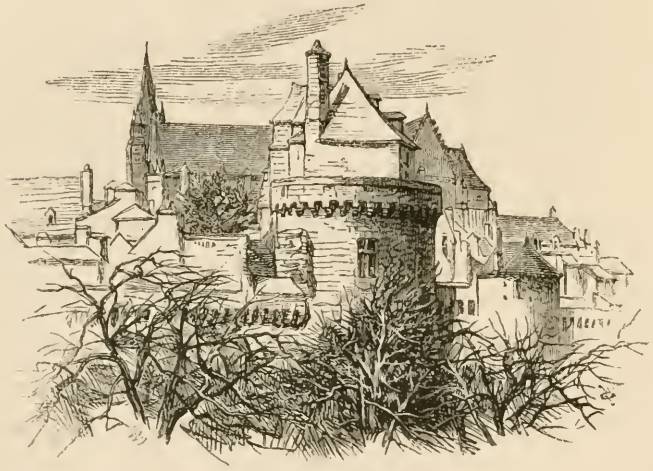
As we came out of the cathedral we saw one of the special features of a Breton town—a small cart, covered with a dark hood, full of sacks of charcoal. A large yellow

dog was fastened under it, and beside it walked a huge Breton in a broad low-crowned black hat, a black jacket, and dark trousers. He stalked along with much dignity, and there was something strangely masterful in his large narrow dark eyes and long straight nose—masterful and yet repelling, quite another order of face from that of a Norman charcoal dealer. Opposite the cathedral is the curious old doorway of what was formerly the Chapelle du Présidial.

From the cathedral we went along the Rue St. Pierre, and then to the right, down the Rue des Orfèvres, till we came to a confectioner's shop, No. 15. We asked here if we could see the room of St. Vincent Ferrier, and were guided through some back premises to a little staircase so narrow and steep that it made one giddy to climb it. At the top is a very small room, which is said to have been occupied by St. Vincent. It is now converted into a chapel. A little way farther on, at the corner of the Rue Noé, are two grotesque half-length stone figures called *Vannes et sa femme.* They support the corner of the projecting upper story, and are very quaintly coloured. Farther down the street is an old archway called Arche de Noé.

From the Rue Noé we found our way on the left into the Rue des Halles, and this led us out on the Place des Lices. This in 1380 was the scene of the Battle of the Five, which took place just twenty-nine years after the Battle of the Thirty. This battle of Vannes consisted of five English and five French knights, and was fought in the presence of Duke Jean IV. and of the Earl of Buckingham. The French appear to have had the best of it. It was also on the Place des Lices, in 1417, that St. Vincent Ferrier preached to the people, and, though he only spoke the Spanish tongue, he

made himself miraculously understood by all. The famous Château de l'Hermine, the residence of the Dukes of Brittany, once stood on the Place des Lices. The Public Library and the Museum of Natural History are placed here. From the Place des Lices we went on to the Place de la Mairie, a very quaint opening, on which stands the old Mairie with its double flight of steps, and on the left an old



Tour de Clisson.

garden wall, over which appeared great magnolia-trees covered with creamy blossoms.

We went down beyond the Mairie into the Rue Basse Cour, and soon reached the famous Tour du Connétable, once, according to some writers, the north-east angle of the Château de l'Hermine, which, as has been said, stood on the Place des Lices.

After the battle of Auray, Clisson quarrelled with Jean IV., because the duke gave the estate of Gâvre, near the Constable's castle of Blain, to the English knight, Sir John

Chandos. On this Clisson took service with the King of France, who made him Constable on the death of Du Guesclin. "Henceforth," says Froissart, "Sir Olivier de Clisson spent all day and all night in contriving how he might best damage both the English and his old master."

When the duke heard that Clisson was going to help raise the enormous ransom asked by the English for the eldest son of Charles de Blois, and to marry this heir of Penthièvre to his own daughter Margaret de Clisson, he became furious, fearing that Clisson meant to dethrone him. He was very unpopular with his own subjects from his fondness for the English, and he had lately offended these allies. He resolved, therefore, by one bold stroke to recover the favour of the English, and put a stop to the invasion which the Constable had planned against that country, and for which troops were assembling both at Harfleur and at Tréguier. "The Duke of Brittany," says Froissart, "to accomplish his plan, appointed a great parliament to be held at Vannes, and sent very affectionate letters to his barons and knights, to entreat that they would be present; but he was particularly pressing with the Constable of France, adding that he was more anxious to see him than all the rest. The Constable never thought of excusing himself, for the duke was now his acknowledged lord, and he wished to be in his favour. He came therefore to Vannes, as did great numbers of other barons. The assembly was numerous and lasted some time, and many things were discussed which concerned the duke and the country; but the intended invasion of England was never touched on, for the duke pretended to know nothing about it and kept a strict silence. The parliament was held in the castle of La

Motte at Vannes, where the duke gave a grand dinner to the barons of Brittany. . . ." The Constable returned the duke's hospitality, intending when all was done "to make for Tréguier, and embark on board his fleet, which was ready for him. . . . . You must know that in these days the Duke of Brittany was building a very handsome and strong castle called the Castle of Ermine, which was almost completed. Being eager to catch the Constable, he said to him, the Lord of Beaumanoir, and other barons, 'My dear sirs, I entreat that before you quit this country you will come and see my castle of Ermine, that you may view what I have done and the plans I intend executing.' They all accepted his invitation, for his behaviour had been so kind and open that they never thought he was imagining mischief. . . . When arrived, the duke, the Constable, the Lords of Laval and Beaumanoir, dismounted, and entered within its apartments. The duke led the Constable by the hand from chamber to chamber . . . . they came to the keep, and stopping at the entrance, the duke said, 'Sir Olivier, there is not a man on this side of the sea who understands masonry like you; enter, therefore, I beg you, and examine the walls well, and if you say it is properly built it shall remain, otherwise it shall be al

"The Constable, who thought nothing ill was intended, replied he would cheerfully do so, and desired the duke to go first. 'No,' said the duke, 'go by yourself, while I talk a little here with the Lord of Laval.'

"The Constable, desirous to acquit himself, entered the tower and ascended the staircase. When he had passed the first floor, some armed men who had been there posted in ambush, knowing how they were to act, shut the door

below them and advanced on the Constable, whom they seized, and, dragging him into an apartment, loaded him with three pairs of fetters. As they were putting them on they said, 'My lord, forgive what we are doing, for we are obliged to do it by the strict orders we have had from the Duke of Brittany.' "

The Lords of Laval and Beaumanoir, hearing the noise, remonstrated, but the duke caused Beaumanoir also to be imprisoned, and but for the firm remonstrances of Laval would perhaps have put both captives to death. Dom Morice, in his History of Brittany, gives a much worse account of the conduct of the duke. He says that the duke desired Sir John de Bazvalan to have the Constable secretly murdered during the night. Bazvalan remonstrated, but the duke would not listen, and insisted on the Constable's death. But in the morning he repented, and sending for Bazvalan asked if his orders had been obeyed. "Yes, my lord, he was drowned last night, and his body is buried in a garden." At this the duke was full of grief, and bade Bazvalan leave his presence and never see his face again. The knight departed and left the duke to the agony of his remorse, but after a time he went back and told him that the Constable still lived.

According to Froissart, the Lord of Laval, Clisson's brother-in-law, gave the duke no respite till he had named the ransom for which he would liberate his illustrious prisoner. It was at last settled that the Lord of Beaumanoir should be set free that he might collect the ransom, and that 100,000 francs, the town of Jugon, and the strong castles of Broc, Lamballe, and Josselin should be ceded to the Duke of Brittany. The Constable was released,

but he was so disturbed by the insult he had received that he gave up the invasion of England, and also the office of Constable of France, saying that he would "no longer hold what he could not gain any honour by."

As one reads Froissart one cannot wonder at the hatred felt by the French historians to the English; they seem to have been always going up and down throughout the land fighting or marauding. It is quite a relief to find one of the gossiping Flemish chronicler's chapters with this heading: "Sir Robert Knolles and Sir John Chandos march from Domme without doing anything."

Clisson's daughter, the stern, vindictive wife of Jean de Penthièvre, avenged her father's captivity most mercilessly on the duke's son, John V., whom she kept imprisoned in her castle of Champtoceaux. It was during this imprisonment that Duke John vowed to give his weight in gold to the cathedral of Nantes, a vow which he accomplished on his liberation.

The Constable's Tower has a double interest now—one may say a treble charm, for it is equally picturesque on close inspection and as viewed from the Garenne Avenue, and, besides the tradition respecting Clisson's imprisonment, it is now the museum of the interesting relics discovered in the dolmens and barrows of the Morbihan. This museum is well worth several visits, there is so much there to provoke curious speculation, although seemingly nothing to throw distinct light on the troubled question of the purpose and origin of these weird stones.

We went in by a little door in the old grey wall to a flower-tangled garden, and there was the old tower with its severe machicolations above, speaking of a rude military age,

while over the walls below all kinds of climbing plants were striving to cover the grey stones with clinging wreaths, the darkness of ivy green and the rich red of American creeper leaves asserting their hues above the more subdued tints.

The museum occupies two floors of the tower—octagon-shaped chambers with deeply splayed windows. It is said that the sea once washed the wall of this tower. The moat is below it, but there are houses built between. The first floor contains various interesting objects of the Middle Ages, some curious embroidery, and some beautiful Aubusson tapestry, a curious collection of coins and seals, and fragments of interesting statues; but on the floor above, reached by the old staircase, are much more interesting treasures: all the remains found in the wonderful barrows or cromlechs of Mont St. Michel at Carnac, of La Butte de Tumiac, and others at Plouharnel, Locmariaker, &c. The collection of celts, or axe-heads, formed of fibrolite, jadeite, and some other materials, all exquisitely polished and sharpened, is said to be unique. There are also necklace beads with pendants and bracelets, of callaïs or green turquoise (these from Mont St. Michel, Carnac), fragments of bones, and other curious objects found in these dolmens, especially a collection of urns.

A little way beyond the tower, at the bottom of the Rue Basse Cour, we passed through a small gate in the wall, commonly called Porte Poterne; but it is a mere door, and not older than the seventeenth century. From this a bridge led over the moat or river, and facing us, right and left, was an avenue of trees which seemed to surround this part of the town; this is the promenade

called Douves de la Garenne, and beyond, in a line from the bridge, is the Garenne itself.

We crossed the bridge, and then looked back; and I do not think for entire picturesqueness and delightful colour the view we saw was surpassed in any town in Brittany. There was the Tour du Connétable frowning darkly at us from the old town wall, houses nestling beneath it among trees and gardens; in the foreground, beside the water, a range of washing-sheds, and dotted along the bank, as far as we could see, boxes full of clothes, and groups of standing and kneeling women, now soaping diligently at a well-worn blue petticoat, now rinsing a snowy shirt in the brown stream. Close by one of the washers was a dear little baby in one of the boxes, crowing and laughing at the noise around it.

The sun was setting, and the level light fell brightly on the women's white caps, while it softened to a dreamy olive the surrounding scene. An artist could have filled a sketch-book on the bridge—the washerwomen's brown faces and snowy caps and low-toned blue and grey gowns, grouped so harmoniously with their surroundings. As in Normandy, gay colour is rarely visible in Morbihan, although one occasionally sees a red skirt.

This view was so enchanting that we stayed a long time on the bridge, watching the lights change on the washers and the shadows deepen on the castle and the trees. It had grown dusk as we came slowly along the avenue on the left, tracing out the interesting old wall—not so old, however, here as on the north and west of the town—till we reached Porte Pater, or Porte Prison, as it is now generally called, because at one time it served as a place of confinement for male criminals, as the Constable's Tower did for females.

It is a remarkable old gate, a Gothic doorway flanked by two massive towers, between which is a lion bearing on a shield the arms of Brittany. The machicolations of the wall adjoining this gate are of the fourteenth century. The six outlets from the walls of Vannes correspond finally, if not directly, with the six Roman roads spoken of by ancient writers. The Porte Prison is almost in a line with the ancient road to Bohalgo, and the Porte Poterne opens almost directly on the ancient road to Nantes. Passing by Porte Prison, and keeping along the Rue du Mené, we come to the oldest part of the walls. The oldest bits of foundation existing in Vannes—and these are said to be undoubtedly Gallo-Roman in construction—reach from the Porte Prison to the Tour du Mené on the north, and from behind the Hôtel du Commerce to the Marché au Seigle on the west. It is very interesting, though it takes some time, to trace these old, very picturesque walls all round the town; but the light grew so dim that we were not able to finish our circuit that evening.

Next morning we went down to the Porte St. Vincent through the town by the Rue des Halles, a quaint old street; then into the Rue Noé, where once stood a remarkable house called Maison du Parlement, or Château Gaillard; and then, by the Rue des Orfèvres, to the Place Poissonnerie. A busy market was going on all over this ill-paved Place, with a branch of trade in it we had not hitherto seen. Brown and white salt piled in straw baskets was set among vast heaps of cabbage, carrots, onions, beans, and lettuce; but there was scarcely any attempt to arrange the vegetables in stalls or booths, as in Normandy; they lay rather huddled together on the uneven stones of the Place.

There was much pleasant variety of costume: the women in black or brown gowns, with chocolate or purple neckerchiefs, figured in white, and reaching to their waists. Brown, patient, stolid old women, with baskets of fresh sardines glistening with exquisite colour, asked us to buy as we passed, but without any of the tempting ways and amusing words of the Norman market-women. Lumps of butter, the size and shape of a tall hat, were everywhere exposed on the tops of large baskets, without any attempt to shade them or set them off with cool green leaves; and the fowls, instead of being packed in baskets, hung in feathered bunches tied by the legs. There was "a rough-and-ready" practical look about everything.

We turned to the left, and found ourselves close to the Porte St. Vincent; more interesting from association than in appearance, for it is in the Italian style of the seventeenth century. The old gate was doubtless of the same date as this, the most modern portion of the old walls. On one of the stones of the wall adjoining this was found the inscription, "Cest œpvre a esté parfaict l'an 1593." The statue of St. Vincent was destroyed during the Revolution, but a new one has been placed in its niche; and the relics of the Spanish saint are each year borne in procession through the archway and round the walls of Vannes.

This gate of St. Vincent leads directly on to the port. At high water this is a pleasant spot. On the right side of the water is the long promenade of the Rabine, with its double avenue of trees; and on the left there seem to be houses with gardens full of trees; beyond, there is also a walk beside the river planted with trees. It is worth while to walk beside the river to get the view of the old walled

town surmounted by the cathedral, though this is seen much better from the river itself; but the best view is from the avenue leading to the Garenne.

Till we were settled at Vannes we did not know the interesting history of the Hôtel de France, or I think we should have taken up our quarters there. It stands on the site of the ancient Château de la Motte, said by tradition to be the actual residence of Waroch I., Count of Vannes, the father of St. Tryphena and the protector of St. Gildas; but this tradition is scouted by historians, who affirm that Waroch held his court in the isles to the south of the Morbihan, these isles having been colonised by Britons flying from their country in the fifth century. This legend of St. Tryphena and her husband Comorre, the Breton Bluebeard, is the chief legend of Vannes. This is not the legend on which is founded the open-air play of Ste. Triffine.

The famous St. Gildas le Sage had become the trusted friend and chief adviser of Count Waroch and the apostle of Morbihan. Tidings of his sanctity and his influence having reached the ears of Comorre, Count of Cornouaille, a wicked and vicious lord, who seems to be the received prototype of Bluebeard, he sent and begged the saint to visit him, and St. Gildas judged it expedient to accept this invitation, in the hope of converting this bloodthirsty wolf into a meek lamb. He therefore left his monastery beside the Blavet, and, accompanied by some of his monks, repaired to the castle of Comorre.

But Comorre did not want to be converted, He had seen the beautiful Tryphena at the court of her father Waroch, and had fallen violently in love with her and made an offer of marriage; but, as he was known to be a wife-

killer, he had been at once refused—his practice being to marry a wife and then, as soon as she was with child, to murder her. In this way he had killed five wives of whom he had been at first violently enamoured. He hoped by means of St. Gildas to induce Count Waroch to accept his suit, and the cruel monster so worked on the saint that he went to Waroch and persuaded him to consent to the marriage.

After much promise of good behaviour on the part of Comorre, the marriage took place. For some time the tyrant kept his word, but one day, on his return home after a short absence, he found his wife embroidering a little cap. "Who are you working for?" he said sternly. "For the little son I hope soon to give you," said Tryphena. He went away frowning heavily, and from this day Tryphena became aware of a change in her husband's behaviour. She was much terrified, and she resolved to return to her father and stay with him till after the birth of her child.

Accordingly one morning she mounted her horse and set out for Vannes; but just before she reached the city the tyrant overtook her, and as she knelt on the ground imploring mercy he seized her by her beautiful hair and cut off her head.

Count Waroch, hearing of this disaster, caused (says Albert le Grand) his daughter's body to be carried to the great hall in the Château de la Motte, at Vannes, and then set off to find St. Gildas, and implored him to restore Tryphena to life. But instead of obeying the count's summons St. Gildas recommended this affair to the prayers of his monks, and then started off for the Castle Finans, in the forest of Quénécan, the residence of the barbarous

Comorre, and summoned the murderer to answer for his crimes. Comorre remained behind his closed gates without answering this appeal; and then the saint flung a handful of dust against the castle wall, which crumbled and fell, thereby destroying the garrison and grievously wounding the tyrant.

St. Gildas went on to Vannes, put Tryphena's head on her body, and restored her to life. She at once declared that she would follow the saint wheresoever he went and devote the rest of her life to God's service. "Not so, my daughter," the holy man said; "it were not seemly for a woman to follow a monk. Remain with your father till your child is born, and then I will consecrate you to God's service in some convent of nuns;" which, adds the chronicler, she did, and when her child was born soon after she called it Tremeur, and handed it over to the care of St. Gildas, to be brought up in the monastery of Rhuys.

Monsieur Lallemand contradicts Albert le Grand, and says there is not the slightest foundation for supposing that Count Waroch dwelt at Vannes. He mentions the Château de la Motte as the place of assembly of the States of Brittany when they demanded vengeance of King Philip Augustus on John Lackland for the murder of his nephew Arthur, and offered the government of the dukedom to his mother Constance, at that time married to her third husband, Guy de Thouars. It was for some time used as the palace of the Dukes of Brittany; but, in 1417, Duke John V. and his duchess, Jeanne of France, daughter of Charles VI., who resided in the Château de l'Hermine, on the Place des Lices, offered St. Vincent Ferrier the Château de la Motte: but the humble-minded preacher refused the

splendid gift, preferring his little room in the Rue des Orfèvres.

It is said that the ancient foundations of the Château de la Motte date from the sixth century, but it was entirely rebuilt in the eighteenth century by Bishop Fajon as the episcopal palace of Vannes. After this it was used as the Préfecture, till the present new and very ugly building was erected outside the town walls, near the Porte Prison or Pater. Since then the Château de la Motte has been used as an hotel for travellers.

The present episcopal palace is on the left as one faces Vannes from the Rabine. The Jesuit College of St. François Xavier lies nearer the town behind the bishop's palace. It once belonged to the sisters of St. Ursula, who now occupy much smaller buildings in the old Capuchin convent on the Place du Morbihan. The College of St. Yves seems to have been the oldest of the ecclesiastical institutions of Vannes. It began in the sixteenth century, but it languished until it was placed under the direction of the Jesuit fathers in the reign of Louis XIII. It is said at one time to have numbered 1,200 pupils; and in 1660 the chapel, which had always been small, became so ruinous that Catherine de Francheville, sister of Claude of Francheville, seneschal and chief magistrate of Vannes, made an offering of 300 louis d'or, and during thirteen following years gave 1,600 livres a year, and other large sums as they were wanted, towards the building of a new chapel. The fathers wished to place the arms of Mademoiselle de Francheville over the door of the building; but she refused this, and proposed the words, "Fundavit eam altissimus," instead. After 1762, when the Jesuits were expelled from all public posts, the college went

through many changes. At the time of the descent on Quiberon it was converted into a powder magazine and a depôt for artillery. Finally, in 1802, it became the Communal College, which still exists in the building on the Place Napoléon.

There are several very interesting religious houses in the town and its suburbs. This Mademoiselle Catherine de Francheville, whose life seems to have been full of good works, founded in Vannes a house of retreat for women desiring to withdraw for a period from the bustle and gaiety of ordinary life. Before her death she had the consolation, says Monsieur Lallemand, of seeing four similar houses established in Brittany—at Rennes, St. Malo, Quimper, and St. Pol de Léon—all of which acknowledged her as their foundress, although she was too humble to permit herself to be chosen as superior to any of them. Françoise d'Amboise, widow of Duke Pierre II., founded the convent of Trois Maries, and took the veil therein in 1469.

Duke John IV. instituted the Order of the Ermine at Vannes. The ermine being the ancient device of Morbihan, that little animal is also found on the coins issued in the reign of this prince. The collar of the order was filled by figures of the ermine, with the motto, "Ā ma vie," on a ribbon across the body of each. This order was instituted in 1351, after the battle of Auray and the death of Charles de Blois.

There are so many excursions to be made from Vannes, that a fortnight or even longer will not exhaust the interest of the neighbourhood. Plenty of curious stones, dolmens, basin stones, are near the town, and may be visited on foot,

taking as a local guide Monsieur Fouquet's useful little manual, "Guide des Touristes et des Archéologues dans le Morbihan," which, however, is not always exact.

Very near the town, on the Elven road, is the enormous rock of Hesquéno, close to the farmhouse of that name. Some way farther along the road is the village of Bohalgo, and near this is a barren moor covered with broken stones. From here one sees Vannes on the west, and on the north the steeple of Rohic. Across the moor, and beyond a little brook, is an open grotto formed of fragments of rocks. This is called the Grotto of Jean II., and also the Capitol. It forms a charming contrast to the arid desolate moor. The little stream, the trees, and the rocks make it a most picturesque retreat. Following the little stream, and passing through a wood of chestnut-trees, we come to a crucifix which stands on the high road to Nantes. When a young peasant can clasp this cross completely in his arms, he is, in popular belief, fit to take a wife. These stone crucifixes, sometimes most roughly carved, are frequent throughout Brittany, at the corners of roads, and often in some very lonely deserted spot. Sometimes they are simple crucifixes, sometimes they have two or three figures at the foot of the cross, and in the extreme west and north of the country immense Calvaries become frequent, with numerous groups of figures rudely carved.

There are also excursions to St. Avé, near which are the ruins of a Roman house, and on a moor, to be recognised by its three windmills, called the Three Kings, are some curious stones with cup-markings. Beyond St. Avé is the camp of Villeneuve, a hill on which may be distinctly traced

a triple Roman fortification. Séné and the isle of Conleau, and many other curiosities, should be visited; they are at distances not too far for good walkers.

The sailors of the peninsula of Séné are called Sinagots, and use a very useful kind of boat pointed at each end. In Séné, as in other villages on the Morbihan, the men are fishers and the women cultivate the soil.

At Limur, in this peninsula, is a little chapel dedicated to St. Ufévrier. In the chapel is a statue of the saint, one foot of which is pierced through and through with pins. St. Ufévrier is supposed to be a husband-finding saint, and the young girl who can succeed in sticking a pin firmly in his foot will have a husband before the end of the year. She, on the contrary, whose pin falls out will have to wait some time for a lover, and it may be will not get one.

MORBIHAN.

THE ENVIRONS OF VANNES.

CHAPTER V.

Elven—Trédion.

WE had heard so much of the Château de Largouët and its Tour d'Elven that we wanted a long day there. So we started early, having arranged overnight to have our breakfast packed to take with us, which was done very nicely by our landlady. The first part of the road was bordered by chestnut-trees, and then the country opened widely on each side, showing stretches of blue distance. Not long afterwards we came in view of the tower of Elven, which is a landmark for some time before it is reached. After driving rather more than two hours from Vannes a road appeared on the left, cut across a desolate common overgrown with furze, at the farther side of which was the tower.

Our driver said that visitors usually went on foot from this point, as the road was very bad; but, although it was still early, the heat had become intense, and there was no shade to be seen on the long track across the common, so we did not feel inclined to walk. The road was

certainly very bad. Our little carriage pitched up and down alarmingly; and when we reached the thick wood which surrounds the tower, and hides it on nearer approach, we all preferred to walk, for the road had become a series of ruts almost a foot in depth, and so rough that it was not easy even to walk on their edges. Our guide said the incessant rains of the last few weeks had made the approach much worse than usual. At length we reached the end of the picturesque maze which seemed to circle round the fortress, and came out in sudden view of the ruins.

Then we saw that a much older large round tower had been hidden by the massive donjon, and that we were surrounded by the ruins of the old castle. Beyond was another square tower, overgrown with ivy. The effect was very striking.

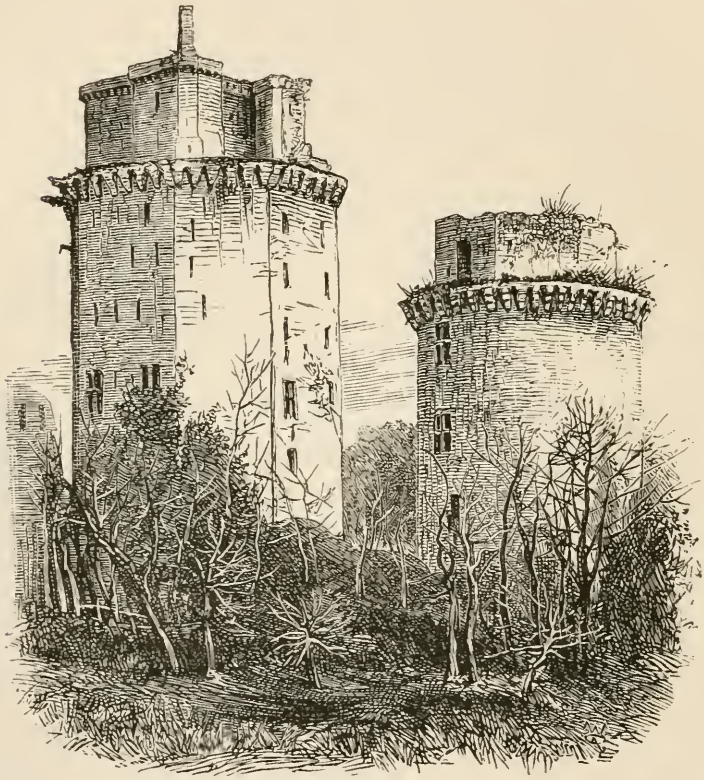
Monsieur Octave Feuillet, who has laid the scene of the most dramatic portion of his book, "Le Roman d'un jeune Homme pauvre," in the Tour d'Elven, gives a most faithful and admirable description of the ruins in the sentences beginning, "Rien de plus imposant, de plus fier et de plus sombre que ce vieux donjon," &c.

The donjon is in excellent preservation, and is almost perfect; and this tall octangular tower with its crenelated top, and a smaller tower rising from the platform within the battlements, has a most marvellous effect, surrounded on all sides by its deep wooded moat, while all about are the ruins and the surrounding trees. The tall dark frowning Tour d'Elven looks doubly grim seen through the tender green of ash and beech. Just facing its low-browed portal a narrow drawbridge crosses the moat.

There is a small farmhouse close by inhabited by the

concierge. He was going out, but he said his sister could show us the tower just as well as he could.

We were too hungry to explore it at once; so we strolled down among the trees beyond the ruins, seeking a pleasant spot to breakfast in. We soon found a charming green



Tour d'Elven.

slope crowned by high trees, which made a screen from the blaze of the sunshine; in front was the open country stretching away for some distance; and here we unpacked the two baskets provided by our landlady. The fare was excellent, but alas! although she had packed *serviettes* for

each person and a table-cloth, she had left out plates and knives and forks; and, although some of the breakfast consisted of what Monsieur Fouquet calls "provisions de bouche," we found it extremely difficult to carve chicken with a penknife. However, we managed to enjoy our breakfast thoroughly, and that sunny morning on the grass outside the old castle of Largouët will always be a bright memory of Brittany.

The *concierge* passed us on his way. He stopped to tell us that he was a martyr to neuralgia, and he wanted to know if we could tell him of a cure.

The sun had risen above our screen of trees, and shone down on us so fiercely that we were glad to go back among the ruins. Our driver, who had turned his horse loose into one of the fields, went and summoned a guide, while we stood gazing up at the lofty imperious-looking tower. It may arise partly from its position, girt as it is on all sides with trees, and yet rising loftily above all; it may be from its dark, frowning appearance; but we thought this tower of Elven, for its size, the most imposing-looking ruin we saw in Brittany.*

The castle was built in 1356 by Odon de Malestroit, who is said to have used for its model a strong fortress which he took in Palestine, when he accompanied St. Louis to the Crusades. This castle of Largouët passed with the rest of the Malestroit property to the Rieux family by marriage during the civil wars which preceded the marriage of Duchess Anne with Charles. Then it was taken and dismantled. It was not till the end of the fifteenth

* M. Fouquet says that in the moat and among the ruins may be found a rare snail-shell (*H. Quimperiana*).

century that the Maréchal de Rieux found time and money to restore the castle from its ruins; and he contented himself with rebuilding the donjon, the present Tour d'Elven. Before this, the castle—perhaps one of the other more ruinous towers—had served as a prison to our Henry VII., who was detained here partly from political motives connected with England, and very much from the jealousy felt by the Duke of Brittany respecting his title, the earldom of Richmond having been an appanage of the dukedom of Brittany ever since the Norman Conquest. Later still the whole property passed into the possession of Fouquet, the minister of Louis XIV. And besides these, other historical memories cling round the old walls.

But all our musings over the dark old fortress vanished at the sight of our guide, who came rolling over the grass-grown orchard between the drawbridge and her house, in sabots much too big for her brown stockingless feet. She was the first thorough Breton peasant we had come in close contact with, and she looked too picturesque for common life. Her short green-black gown had burned and faded in the sunshine till it was full of charming colour; her large straight blue apron nearly met behind her, and the bib came high in front; the body of her gown had a square opening in front, and seemed to be worn over a thick calico nightgown with a large falling white collar and sleeves. She wore the short Vannes cap, with its broad hem thrown back from the forehead. She was old and fat and brown, but she had been handsome once, and she looked like a picture.

She went on before us across the drawbridge, and unlocked the door of the tower. As we passed through into the inner entrance she showed us the immense thickness of the

walls. There are two staircases; the one which mounts to the top is of a good width. As one mounts one circles round, looking now down into the ruined interior, now out of external loopholes at the surrounding country. We passed the chapel on our way up, built in the thickness of the walls, and marked by a large Gothic window. At last we reached the top, and our guide invited us to walk round the grassed platform on to which we issued to see the view; but although it is supported by the machicolations, the edge is ruined and broken, and at such an immense height it is not a tempting promenade. Our guide waited a few moments, and then, shrugging her shoulders, she said, "When I was young I would have run round it without waiting to be asked twice."

The surrounding country is flat, but there are many ruined castles and manor-houses grouped round the fortress; among them, to the north-west, the remains of the Château of Kerleau, once belonging to the family of Descartes, and, to the north, the Château of Kerfily, with its huge round tower.

Our guide seemed to take little interest in the château, but she was curious about the affairs of the outside world. She seated herself at one of the openings in the staircase, and while my companions went to look at the chapel she catechised me respecting the English. "I see no one," she said, "but the visitors who come; and they are so different: a few talk, some say nothing. But I wish to know if the English are really so rich a people as folks say they are."

She was shocked to hear how dear provisions were in England, and then she asked particularly the rate of servants' wages, and seemed disappointed to find that a London and a Paris cook were paid at nearly the same

rate. I think I dissipated many of her notions about the English.

One of my companions asked her to let him sketch her, and the good-natured dame was delighted at the idea. "But Monsieur must have my fête-day cap." And she ran off as fast as her old bare brown legs would go up the outside staircase of her house to her bedroom, to put on her Sunday cap—one of the muslin caps with long broad-hemmed lappets reaching to the waist, which we had so much admired in Vannes. She then placed herself as easily and naturally as possible on a fragment of granite, and sat there chatting. A favourite pig came and grunted round her, and then lay down to sleep at her feet. She made a pleasant picture, sitting under green leaves made almost transparent by the sunshine and showing patches of the intense blue overhead. Either the heat or the pig's example overpowered its mistress, for she began to nod drowsily, and presently told the artist that she was hungry, as she had not yet breakfasted. Poor good-tempered old woman!—and this was nearly two o'clock.

She came out again on the top of her staircase, after breakfast, looking most picturesque there with the surrounding of tender green, and wished us good-bye as we went back to the road on our way to the village of Elven.

It is worth going to see as a specimen of a Breton village. The houses are grim and cheerless, and the people savage-looking and unversed in all civilised ways; they came to the low arched doorways and gazed at us curiously, as if they did not often see strangers. The church was in process of restoration, and, so far as we could judge in its incomplete state, seemed to be in judicious hands.

At one corner of the churchyard is the bone-house, and in this is the portrait of a woman. About ninety years ago, in digging a grave in this churchyard, the body of a woman was discovered, perfectly preserved and dried to a mummy. Some of the oldest of the villagers then remembered that this was the body of a young girl of remarkable virtue and piety, who had died many years before. Her preservation was considered miraculous. She was treated as a saint, and her remains, placed in the chapel of the churchyard, were looked on with much veneration; but, says M. de Frémin-ville, "the cannibals of 1793, being driven back into Elven by the Royalists, broke to pieces and scattered these relics." When public worship was restored, however, a portrait of the saint was placed over the spot occupied formerly by her body, and this is still treated as an object of reverence.

About four kilomètres from Elven are the remains of a Gallo-Roman villa; but to find it it is necessary to ask the way to the village of St. Christophe, and it saves time to take a child from Elven as a guide. Several curiosities, still to be seen in the museum at Vannes, were found here in 1842, when the remains of the villa were discovered. Near it is an ancient votive column with this inscription: "MAGN—IMP—CÆS—AVRELIAN—INVICT—TRIB—PO—III P. P—A D. M.," in five lines, one above another.

The peasants had actually hollowed out this column to make a drinking trough for cattle; but it has now been rescued, and has had a granite cross placed on it to secure it from future injury. Nine centuries before Odon de Malestroit built Elven, the Romans had a station at St. Christophe.

It is a pity that there is no means of sleeping at Elven

—the *auberge* certainly does not look inviting—as the neighbourhood, especially to the north, between Elven and Trédion, teems with interesting stones. Not very far from Elven, down a road on the left leading to Trédion, is a valley with hills on both sides. From this point it is necessary to go on foot down a steep path on the left to a wretched little village called Des Princes. North of this is a dolmen supported by a double range of upright stones, called La Loge du Loup. There is also a large tract of waste land on the right of the road to Trédion full of strange megalithic blocks. One of them is an immense stone table lying on a heap of rocks, and on this table is placed a huge rock the top of which is scooped in hollow basins or cups. This is called La Roche Binet, and seems to be a complete puzzle to archæologists.

There is a little inn at Trédion where one can rest and feed the horses, but it is better to take one's own provisions. It is a pretty little place; the old château has been completely modernised. Beyond Trédion, down a narrow lane, is the village of La Grande Villeneuve; and all round this, on the moor and in the fields, are dolmens, menhirs, broken fragments of hollowed stones—more than one day's work for the archæologist.

It is possible to return to Elven by way of Kerfily on foot, sending the carriage round by the road. The remains of the old castle, which belonged in the fifteenth century to the family of Couëtquen, and afterwards to that of De Brigniac, are preserved in the courtyard of the present château. As one cannot sleep at Elven it is impossible to accomplish these expeditions and to see the Tour d'Elven in one day, but it is a great pity to miss either.

MORBIHAN.

THE PENINSULA OF RHUYS.

CHAPTER VI.

Sarzeau—St. Gildas—Sucinio.

A DELIGHTFUL excursion from Vannes is that of the peninsula of Rhuys. It is less specially Armorican in its associations than some other parts of Morbihan, but it is full of interest of a mixed kind. There we find traces of St. Gildas, the hermit of the sixth century; and of Abelard, the scholar monk of the Middle Ages. Three centuries later comes the famous castle of Sucinio, the residence of the Dukes of Brittany, and the birthplace of Arthur, Constable de Richemont, the successor of Du Guesclin and Clisson. Three centuries later still, in the little town of Sarzeau, at the beginning of the peninsula, was born the famous author of "Gil Blas;" while the chief monument of the district, the famous Butte de Tumiac, goes back to remote ages—perhaps to a time before the soil had been trodden by foreign invaders. Besides these varied associations there is the curious old Port Navalo, Cæsar's harbour, with a Roman road running from it to Nantes by way of Vannes. Indeed, it seems difficult to find a country fuller of interest than

Morbihan; and almost the most interesting part of it is to be found in its peninsula of Rhuys and on the shores of its little sea.

We drove first to Sarzeau, passing the pretty château of Kerlevenan. Our driver wished us to go first to Sucinio, but we were anxious to get to St. Gildas before low water, as there is good bathing there. The road between Vannes and Sarzeau is not interesting, but the day was so exquisitely clear and bright, and our horse went so well, that we found the drive delightful. On our way we passed a small cemetery. In this was a bone house, with curious little boxes inside painted black and white and shaped like toy dog-kennels, with the inscription, "Ci-gît le chef de Monsieur," and then followed the name. Each box contained a skull. It seems to be a received custom after a certain time to dig up the skeletons of departed friends, their bones being put in the ossuaries and the skulls in these hideous little boxes.

We had heard a good report of the inn at Sarzeau, and were much disappointed with its appearance; but, spite of the little dingy room to which, after some delay, we were admitted, we found the fare and cooking excellent, although the native wine of Sarzeau still merits its historical reputation of roughness and acidity. The kind dark-eyed hostess was full of apologies because she had so little variety to offer; but she gave us cutlets, an omelette, "biftek" and fried potatoes—all excellent and well-cooked—good bread and butter, pears, and a good bottle of vin-de-grave, and then apologised for charging us two francs each.

There is nothing to see in Sarzeau but the house where Le Sage was born, standing back from the road with its gate set in the old grey garden wall, gay with tufts of red valerian.

Its present owner was in the little garden, and he very kindly asked us to come in and see the bedroom in which the author of "Gil Blas" is said to have begun life in 1688. The walls are panelled and painted pale blue, but there is no specialty in the room; and the owner told us that Le Sage must have left Sarzeau when very young, as his father gave up the house soon after his birth.

St. Gildas is only six kilomètres from Sarzeau. The village looked small and insignificant, but we found the abbey church extremely interesting; the choir and apse, with its three round chapels, and the transepts, are very old, the nave of much later date; it has been badly restored. The monastery is said to have been founded in the sixth century by St. Gildas, surnamed Le Sage; his tomb stands behind the high altar, for though he died in his hermitage, in the Ile Houath, his body was miraculously restored to the monks of Rhuys.

There are in the north transept three other very old stone coffins. Inscriptions on two of these show that they mark the graves of St. Rivo and St. Felix, abbots of St. Gildas; a third, nearer the altar, is supposed to belong to St. Goustan, or Dunstan. He was converted by St. Gildas when he was a pirate in the isle of Ushant, and he became a lay brother in the abbey of Rhuys. It is said that his whole life was passed in prayer. In the choir, very much obliterated, are five gravestones, to the memory of four children of Duke John I., who died 1246-51 at Sucinio, and also of Jeanne of Brittany, who died 1388. She was daughter to John of Montfort.

At the west end of the nave are two large capitals scooped into the form of *bénitiers*. They are very curiously sculp-

tured, and are said to have belonged to the ancient nave. The capitals of the columns on each side of the choir are also very curious, but the figures on these, as well as those on the *bénitiers*, are much disfigured by whitewash.

As we came up the aisle again, thinking of the two famous abbots St. Gildas and Abelard, a side door opened, letting in a flood of sunlight, and in came a tall sister and a troop of schoolgirls clad in dark blue gowns with white aprons and caps.

They ranged themselves in the rows of seats facing the confessional in the south aisle, and first one little maid, and then, when she retired, another, stepped forward and knelt down to make her confession. It was a very tranquil, primitive scene, and, except for the later date of some of the building, just such a scene as might have been witnessed by Abelard himself.

The church, which formed part of the abbey in the time of St. Gildas, was destroyed by the Northmen, but the Abbot Rivo carried away the bones of the saint into Berri, where a monastery was dedicated to St. Gildas on the banks of the Indre. Some of these relics were, however, brought back to the peninsula by St. Felix, who, in the reign of Duke Geoffrey, entirely rebuilt the monastery, and placed the remains of St. Gildas in the tomb behind the high altar.

St. Gildas was educated in England, in the monastery of Hydultus, in Cornwall; but being moved to visit Brittany, he became the apostle of Morbihan in the fifth century, and the chief friend and adviser of Guerech, or Waroch, Count of Vannes.

It was after the saint's celebrated interference in defence of St. Tryphena that Guerech persuaded him to leave his hermitage on the banks of the Blavet, and establish himself

and his monks in a castle belonging to the count in the peninsula of Rhuys.

Here St. Gildas founded a large monastery, which attained a great reputation for sanctity, and which, after the death of St. Gildas, became the bourne of a celebrated pilgrimage.

It appears that the approaching death of the Abbot Gildas was revealed not only to himself, but also to the monks of St. Hydultus, Cornwall, where the saint, as has been said, was educated with St. Samson of Dol and St. Pol de Léon; and many of these Cornish monks came over to Brittany to take a last farewell of the renowned saint in his retreat in the little isle of Houath. For some time before his death he had retired there with two or three of his monks, after having devolved the entire care of the monastery to the Prior of Rhuys. St. Gildas gave his last counsels to these British monks, and also to those of his own community who had come over from Rhuys to bid him farewell, and then he desired to be carried into the chapel of the hermitage, where, having made his confession to the Prior of Rhuys and received the last sacraments, he thus addressed his monks :—

"I beg you, my brothers, when I shall have expired, not to enter into any disputes concerning my body; place it in a boat, and place under my head the stone which all through my life has served me for a pillow, after which you must quit the boat and launch it on the open sea, and let it go where God pleases. He will provide it a resting-place where it seems good to Him. May the God of peace dwell in you always."

This last commendation was needed, for as soon as St. Gildas was dead, and his body, dressed in abbatial robes

and invested with the insignia of office, lay in the boat according to his commandment, a great dispute arose between the monks of Cornwall and the monks of Rhuys; the former alleging that, as St. Gildas had professed and received ordination in their abbey of St. Hydultus, he belonged to them; they moreover showed the orders they had brought from their abbot to take possession of the holy relics. "But," says Albert le Grand, "God set them at one again; for, when they least expected it, the boat in which the holy body lay sank gently to the bottom of the sea, to the great surprise and regret of all;" they sought it perseveringly for several days along the shore, but in vain.

At last the Cornish monks gave up the search and went back to their own country, but the monks of Rhuys persevered in seeking for it for three months, and then held a solemn prayer-meeting and a fast of three days, at the end of which it was revealed to one of them the place and time when the body would be restored. Accordingly, in Rogation Week, as the monks went in solemn procession after their custom to the oratory of Ste. Croix, built by St. Gildas, they perceived close by a boat dry on the sand, in a little cove, and in the boat lay the body of St. Gildas as perfect as when they last saw it. As a memorial of this recovery they took the stone from under the head of the saint and placed it in the chapel of the Holy Cross; and, carrying the body of St. Gildas back to the abbey of Rhuys, they buried it there on the 12th day of May, 570.

The cemetery occupies the site of the ancient parish church, not far from the abbey church, but the abbey buildings have nothing ancient about them. It is probable that the original abbey was built of wood, for the Normans utterly

destroyed it; but, in 1008, Duke Geoffrey I. rebuilt it in stone, and established there a community of Benedictines, whose first abbot was Felix, afterwards canonised. Judicael, Bishop of Vannes, and Hadwise, widow of Geoffrey, supported St. Felix in his attempts at civilisation. He restored agriculture round his monastery of Rhuys in the eleventh century, and showed himself to be a true benefactor to Brittany. The present buildings are now inhabited by sisters, who during the bathing season take boarders at a very moderate rate, and have instituted a bathing establishment a little way along the coast. But the site of St. Gildas and its garden also are full of interest as having been associated with the fifth abbot, the famous Abelard, called by Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, "The Socrates of France; the sublime Plato of the West; our Aristotle; the equal or the master of all logicians past and present; the recognised prince of science of the whole universe."

This good Abbot of Cluny, who received the persecuted man when he fled from St. Gildas, told also of Abelard that death found him standing ready, not asleep like so many others. In 1125, when Abelard gave up his oratory of Paraclete, near Nogent-sur-Seine to Héloïse, the monks of St. Gildas were in want of an abbot, and they besought the celebrated scholar to come among them as their head.

He came, but Abelard was not fitted for the post. Disgusted by the misconduct of the community, he tried to establish a stricter, purer rule of life, and he roused the fierce strong nature of these Breton monks to revolt. They tried more than once to poison the quiet refined scholar, who shrank from their rough profligate behaviour, and when these attempts failed they tried to stab him. At last,

wearied out and fearing for his life, Abelard escaped through a little door in the garden wall which is said still to exist: it is at least pointed out by the good sisters. Abelard fled to Cluny, where he at last found peace and shelter till his death. Many of his letters to Héloïse were written from St. Gildas.

"I inhabit a barbarous country," he writes, "at the end of the world on the shores of the ocean. My only associates are ferocious and turbulent persons, whose language is strange and horrible to me. My walks are on the inaccessible shores of a stormy sea. My unlicensed and rebellious monks acknowledge no rule but that of misrule. I wish you could see my house; you would never take it for an abbey; the doors are ornamented with the feet of deer, wolves, bears, wild boars, and hideous heads of owls. Every day I encounter fresh dangers. I fear each moment to see a sword suspended over my head."

Abelard was a Breton, born near Nantes in 1079. It is possible that some part of the present church of St. Gildas may have been standing in his time, but the archives of the abbey were unfortunately burned in 1796 by the mayor of the town. The convent garden is, however, full of memories of the persecuted abbot. There is a little wood there with a terrace commanding a very extensive sea-view; and as we wandered down to the rocks, which stretch out in long grey and brown tongues into the Atlantic, we pictured the sad, solitary monk wandering there, finding more sympathy in the wild waves leaping up against the bold brown rocks than he could find among the fierce undisciplined men who had called him to rule over them, and whom he could not control.

There is a peculiar silvery quality in some of these rocks which makes them glitter like brilliant metal in the sunshine. The tongue-like projections have little bays between them, some wild and rocky, some few sandy and fit for bathing We saw a lady bathing her child from one of these lower rocks; and as we came back there were pleasant groups in the court in front of the convent, the children dancing the old French round of "La Boulangère a des écus."

Men and women are lodged separately in the convent at a very moderate rate. The air seemed delightful, and the bold sweep of ocean was finer than any sea we had yet seen in Brittany. To women seeking a healthy quiet bathing-place St. Gildas offers many attractions. The soil is very fertile, and vegetation is luxuriant and rapid.

It is evident, from some of the letters of Abelard and from other sources, that at one time this peninsula was covered, in part at least, with forest trees. The Dukes of Brittany had a hunting-lodge at the east end of the peninsula, now converted into farm buildings, which still retain the ancient name Couët-er-Sall (le Bois de la Salle). Rhuys or Rhoë-is signifies royal, and the peninsula was always the property of the reigning duke, whose right of seignory extended over the whole country except that held by the abbot and monks of St. Gildas. It seems a peaceful sequestered strip of land, so remote from the strife of great cities that one does not wonder at the name given by the Breton duke to his castle by the sea—Soucy-N'y-Ot—a name, however, which did not succeed in banishing sickness, and death, and war, and strife, from its walls.

As we drove back to Sarzeau we passed the restored château of Ker Thomas, inhabited by a son-in-law of Mon-

sieur de Francheville, the present owner of Sucinio and of very extensive property in the neighbourhood.

We had intended to go on from St. Gildas to the Butte de Tumiac, as it is only five kilomètres distant; but our driver declared that the road was impracticable, so we drove back to Sarzeau and thence to Sucinio.

We saw the ruins of Sucinio, the summer palace of the Dukes of Brittany, for a long while before we approached them. Indeed the castle is seen for miles from several sides, standing in lonely, dreary vastness beside the Atlantic, without a tree to break the naked desolation of the flat salt marshes that stretch between its walls and the sea. One almost shivers at the exceeding bareness of these ruins. The masonry of the walls and towers is so admirable and so perfectly preserved externally that it defies ivy and other parasites in their attempts to clothe the bold outlines of the truly royal pile.

In shape it represents a pentagon, surrounded by a wall divided by six towers; there were formerly seven, or some say eight. Three of these towers, those of the entrance gateway and that in the centre of the north wall, are very large. The northern tower seems to be much older than the rest, and was probably built by John I. (Le Roux). He founded Sucinio about 1229, on the site of an ancient monastery; but it was almost entirely rebuilt in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Still the difference in the masonry and in the shape of the machicolations proves that the walls now remaining are not all of the same period. Some Gothic windows on the right of the entrance show the site of the ancient chapel.

We crossed the drawbridge over the deep but now dry

moat, followed by a troop of barefooted children eager to act as guides. Above the gateway is a lion bearing on a shield the arms of Brittany; his right paw holds a lance; on each side is a stag couchant. There have been three gates, one within another, and the marks of the hinges and the grooves for the portcullis are easily seen. We were surprised to find so large an area within, for though the exterior of the castle looks imposing, it loses in size because there is nothing by which to measure it—it stands in such complete isolation on the flat seashore. The lofty north-west tower is the most perfect, and by the staircase in this we mounted to the battlements, and walked some way along them. The view is splendid. South-east are the church towers of Le Croisic and Le Bourg de Batz, and the mouth of the Loire, with the isles of Hœdic and Houath. Farther still, a long low line in the horizon is Belle Ile. West is the peninsula of Quiberon, and nearer the abbey of St. Gildas; beyond all, the vast Atlantic.

There is something indescribably sad in this huge dismantled fortress standing thus alone on the shores of the ocean, without any of the foliage which usually surrounds and clothes the walls of an ancient castle. It is literally "the Castle by the sea." There is a tradition that Sucinio was anciently inhabited by Raymondin and his wife, the fairy Mélusine. "He was called Count of Forêt, now called Ile de Rhuis," says Jean la Haye, "and they built a monastery in honour of the Trinity, where they are honourable buried."

Our barefooted retinue did not give us much time for contemplation; girls as well as boys clambered about like goats, perching themselves on crumbling corners of the bat-

tlements and then on the edge of loopholes in the staircase, till their antics became really alarming. As soon as we began to descend the ruined staircase they ran on in front, and when we reached the landing they showed us a communication with a long gallery, which seems to extend within the wall as far as the chapel; down in the vaults, at the foot of the towers, are loopholes made for the use of cannon.

In the civil wars of Brittany Sucinio often changed masters. It was taken by Charles of Blois, by John of Montfort, and by Du Guesclin. The Duchess or Joan of Navarre, third wife of John IV., afterwards the wife of our Henry IV., gave birth at Sucinio, the 24th August, 1393, to the famous Arthur of Richemont, the companion in arms of Joan of Arc, and the famous successor as Constable of France to Du Guesclin and Clisson. Finally, he succeeded his nephew, Peter II., as Duke of Brittany, but he only reigned fifteen months. In 1532 Francis I. presented Sucinio to the beautiful Françoise de Foix, Countess of Chateaubriand. Later on it came into the possession of Catherine de Médicis. Henry IV. gave it up to Marshal Schomberg. During the wars of the League it fell to the Leaguers under the Duke de Mercœur, and in the reign of Louis XIV. it belonged to the Princess de Conti, the daughter of the Duchess de Lavallière. Finally, in 1795, at the fatal expedition to Quiberon, the Chevalier de Tinteniac landed a division of the Royalist army before Sucinio, and took possession of it. This is the last time that Sucinio appears in history. The Royalist troops did it much damage, and destroyed all the remaining woodwork, but it will take more than one century to crumble the firmly cemented old stones that still remain in lonely grandeur by the seashore.

It is perhaps better to see Sucinio and St. Gildas, and then return and sleep at Sarzeau, but we had feared to risk this; and the distance from Vannes is so trifling that it is easy to make another expedition from thence, breakfasting at Sarzeau.

It is not a long drive on to Tumiac, but the road is wretched. The *butte* or tumulus is now closed; since the excavations made in 1853 earth has fallen in and choked the opening.

There is said to be a very curious dolmen within the tumulus; and at the museum of Vannes we saw thirty celtæ, three necklaces of callaïs or green turquoise, and a bit of human bone which had not been burned, all which treasures were found in excavating this tumulus, in 1853, by Monsieur L. Galles and Dr. Fouquet.

But though one cannot see the interior, it is worth while to visit the *butte* for the magnificent view from its summit. It is a great mound, about fifty feet high and nearly three hundred feet in diameter, covered with grass, and from it one commands the whole of the Morbihan. To the south and east one gets about the same view as from the battlements of Sucinio; but to the west one sees Locmariaker, and the strangely jagged and rugged shores of the little sea.

About two kilomètres farther on we come to Arzon, but at low tide it is better to go on foot down a narrow lane, past the chapel of Le Croisy to Le Petit Mont. There is a remarkable dolmen here in a large barrow, about thirty feet high. This was explored in 1856, and in it was found one chamber with sculptures on the supporting stones. On one of these two human feet are distinctly traced in outline. This is the only example of human presentment in any

Breton celtic stones. It is a very little way from Arzon to Port Navalo, and not far off there are menhirs and dolmens worth seeing, at Pencastel and Bernon. The Pointe St. Nicholas is also to be noticed. Veneti, Romans, and Templars have all occupied it in turn.

Port Navalo itself is a very ancient seaport, and is now a pleasant little bathing-place, with quaint, simple inhabitants. The steamer which plies between Auray and Belle Ile stops at Port Navalo. It takes two hours and a half to reach Belle Ile, and for those who like sailing the journey is very pleasant, and the fortifications on the island are very remarkable. They were begun by Marshal de Retz, continued by Fouquet, and much increased from the designs of Napoleon, who meant to complete them, but left them unfinished. However, they are now supposed to be perfect.

The coast scenery is very fine in Belle Ile, but it must be seen from a boat to be thoroughly enjoyed. It is a large island, eighteen kilomètres long and ten wide, but the ancient monuments mentioned by old travellers have all disappeared. It is very fertile, and has a breed of good horses. The caps of the women are remarkably pretty—a long sugar-loaf crown, not upright, but almost horizontal, and fluted from end to end with fine goffering. We thought some of the girls quite as pretty as their caps.

MORBIHAN.

THE ENVIRONS OF VANNES.

CHAPTER VII.

Malestroit. Josselin.
Ploërmel. St. Jean Brévelai.

THE longest excursion to be made from Vannes is that to Ploërmel and Josselin, and this requires two or three days.

It is possible to go by rail from Vannes to Questembert, and thence by the correspondence to Ploërmel, passing through Rochefort and Malestroit, and then on from Ploërmel to Josselin by an omnibus which runs between the two towns, only six kilomètres apart. But it saves time to take a carriage direct from Vannes to Ploërmel, although the distance is considerable (forty-five kilomètres), by way of Elven. We were advised not to pass through Elven, but to make a détour from the main road to Malestroit, which is about eighteen kilomètres from Ploërmel. This lengthens the journey. But Malestroit is a very quaint little town, which till the wars of the League was walled; then Mercœur so effectually destroyed its fortifications that only faint traces of them remain.

There is a most remarkable old window in the little ivy-

clad cemetery chapel, with legends relating the story of each compartment. Both this chapel and the parish church of Malestroit are partly of the twelfth century and partly Gothic architecture of the fifteenth. There are several curious old fifteenth and sixteenth century houses. One of these, at the corner of a street facing the Halles, reminded us of the houses at Lisieux. There are on it quaintly sculptured figures of a sow spinning, a huntsman blowing his horn, and other grotesque subjects, the most strange being that of a Breton in a stocking nightcap, holding his wife by the hair while he beats her with a stick. These are called Malestroit and his wife. Malestroit belonged to the Breton family of that name, and was once a strong place of defence with a castle.

Monsieur Fouquet mentions several points of interest close at hand, and recommends Sérent, on the direct road between Elven and Ploërmel, as a good place to dine and sleep at. But in these long expeditions it is always safer to take either breakfast or dinner in the carriage, as frequently white bread is not to be obtained in even a good-sized village. One can see the stone bridge of thirteen arches at Rue St. André on the way to Ploërmel.

It is too late to see Ploërmel on arriving in the evening; the streets are so narrow that one needs broad daylight to make out the curious old houses in them. Like Malestroit, Ploërmel has lost its walls, but it has a sixteenth-century church, which is considered very fine. There is some very quaint carving outside—a barber sewing up his wife's mouth, a pig playing the bagpipes, and other grotesque subjects. A curious window behind the organ represents the life of St. Armel; and there are two recumbent statues in armour of

Dukes John II. and III. of Brittany, brought from the Carmelite church founded by John II. in the early part of the fourteenth century, and destroyed at the Revolution. The detail of the armour on these statues is remarkable. The courtyard of the Carmelite convent still exists, and in it are four statues in Kersanton granite; one of these represents Philip de Montauban, the Chancellor of Duchess Anne, and another his second wife, Anne du Chatelier. James II. of England lodged in Ploërmel, when he reviewed his troops on their return from Ireland in 1690.

The environs of Ploërmel are pretty and wooded—there is an abundance of chestnut-trees in this country—but the great attraction it offers is its nearness to the Château of Josselin. About two miles to the west of Ploërmel we pass a fine lake, called L'Etang du Duc; but the country between this and Josselin is very bare and flat, a great stretch of moorland covered with heather. One sees the famous obelisk some time before it is reached. This was erected in place of a crucifix destroyed at the Revolution. The crucifix had been placed on this spot, called Mi-voie, to mark the site of a huge oak, called Chêne de Mi-voie, destroyed during the wars of the League, but around which was fought the famous Combat of the Thirty, in which thirty Bretons on the side of Charles de Blois defeated thirty adherents of De Montfort, twenty of whom were English, under the command of an English knight named Bembro.

It seemed strange that Froissart does not speak of this combat, and that it is only mentioned in the ballad, and in the author quoted by De Fréminville; but Monsieur de Fréminville asserts that this can be accounted for by the well-known partiality and jealousy of English writers. He also

says that in some of the MS. copies of Froissart he alludes to this combat; but adds that Froissart, being very politic, suppressed in certain copies of his work all passages likely to wound the susceptible vanity of Englishmen. Lately we heard that in a MS. Froissart in Paris this chapter has been found, and M. de Villemarqué, in his notes to the "Battle of the Thirty," says that Froissart speaks of it in vol. iii. p. 34.

It happened in the year 1351, during one of the truces which occurred in the long war between Blois and De Montfort for the possession of the dukedom, that Bembro, or Brembro, held Ploërmel for De Montfort, and Robert de Beaumanoir, Marshal of Brittany, held Josselin for Charles of Blois. During the truce the English, according to these Breton writers, behaved like brigands, harrying the peasants and pillaging travellers even on the lands of Josselin. At last some of these tormented sufferers escaped to the castle of Josselin, and throwing themselves at the feet of De Beaumanoir implored his protection against the marauding English.

De Beaumanoir hastened to Ploërmel, and rebuked Bembro for his infraction of the truce, but the Englishman replied so insolently that the marshal defied him to prove his right in a combat of thirty to thirty.

De Beaumanoir had some trouble in making his selection, so many of his bravest knights being eager to fight; while Bembro, not being able to find thirty English in his garrison, was obliged to make up his number with Flemings and Bretons of the Montfort party. On the 27th March, 1350, the two parties met midway, at the oak, between Josselin and Ploërmel. Arrived here they dismounted, and Bembro placed his men in a single line, serried closely one against another, and bristling with pikes.

At first the Bretons lost several men; and De Beaumanoir being wounded, and losing much blood, asked for drink; to which Geoffrey du Bois answered, "Bois ton sang, Beaumanoir, et ta soif passera." Just as the marshal was on the point of being captured by Bembro, Alain de Keranrais pierced the English captain's visor, and, after another blow from Geoffrey du Bois, Bembro fell dead; but, spite of the death of their leader, the English fought valiantly. It was not till William de Montauban, a Breton squire, pretended to fly, but really only retreated to the spot where the horses had been left, and then, returning on horseback, charged the enemy and rode many of them down, that the French gained the victory.

On the obelisk is this inscription :—

"Vive le Roi long-temps
Les Bourbons toujours."

Then follows the date, &c.; and then,—

"Postérité Bretonne imitez vos ancêtres."

Below are the names of the victorious Bretons.

The following is a literal translation of the ballad in Villemarqué's book :—

THE BATTLE OF THE THIRTY.

I.

The month of March with its hammers comes and knocks at our doors. The trees are bent by the rain, falling in torrents, and the roofs crack under the hail.

But these are not only March hammers which knock at our doors; it is not only hail which cracks the roofs.

It is not only hail, it is not only the rain falling in torrents that strikes; worse than the wind and the rain are the detestable English!

II.

St. Kado, our patron, give us strength and courage, so that we may to-day conquer the enemies of Brittany.

If we come back safe and sound we will offer to you a girdle and a golden gown, a sword and a sky-blue mantle;

And every one will say when they look at you, O blessed St. Kado,—

"In paradise, as on the earth, St. Kado has not his equal."

III.

"Tell me, tell me, how many are they, my young squire?"

"How many are there of them? I will tell you presently: one, two, three, four, five, six:

"How many are there? I am going to tell you: how many are there, my lord?—five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen.

"Fifteen! and others come with them—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen."

"If there are thirty like ourselves, forward, friends, and courage! Straight at the horses with the halberts. They shall not again cut our corn in the ear!"

The blows fell as rapidly as hammers on an anvil; blood overflowed like a brook after a shower;

The armour was torn and rent like the rags of a beggar; the cries of the knights were as fierce as the roaring of the stormy sea.

IV.

The badger-head (Bembro) said then to Tinténiac, as he drew near,—

"Hold, Tinténiac, take a blow of my good lance, and tell me if it is an empty reed."

"That which will be empty in a moment is thy skull, my good friend: more than one crow shall scratch and pick thy brains."

Before he ended speaking he gave him such a blow of his mallet that he smashed both head and casque as if both had been a snail.

Seeing which, Keranrais began to laugh heartily:

"If they were all served like this one, they would conquer the country."

"How many slain, good squire?"

"The dust and blood hinder me from seeing."

"How many have we slain, young squire?"

"Here are five, six, seven, quite dead."

V.

They had fought from break of day to noon; from noon till night they fought the English.

The Lord Robert of Beaumont cried out,—

"I thirst; oh, I greatly thirst!"

When Du Bois threw at him these words:—

"If you thirst, friend, drink your blood!"

And Robert hearing him turned away his face for shame, and fell on the English and killed five.

"Tell me, tell me, my squire, how many are left!"

"My lord, I will tell you: one, two, three, four, five, six."

"Spare the lives of these, but let them pay one hundred golden sous —one hundred sous of brilliant gold shall each pay for the good of the country."

VI.

He would have been no friend of the Bretons who had not applauded in the town of Josselin, when our men came back with broom flowers in their helmets;

He would not have been a friend of the Bretons, nor of the saints of Brittany either, who had not blessed St. Kado, patron of his country's warriors.

Who did not admire, applaud, and bless, and who did not sing,—

"In paradise, as on the earth, St. Kado has not his equal!"

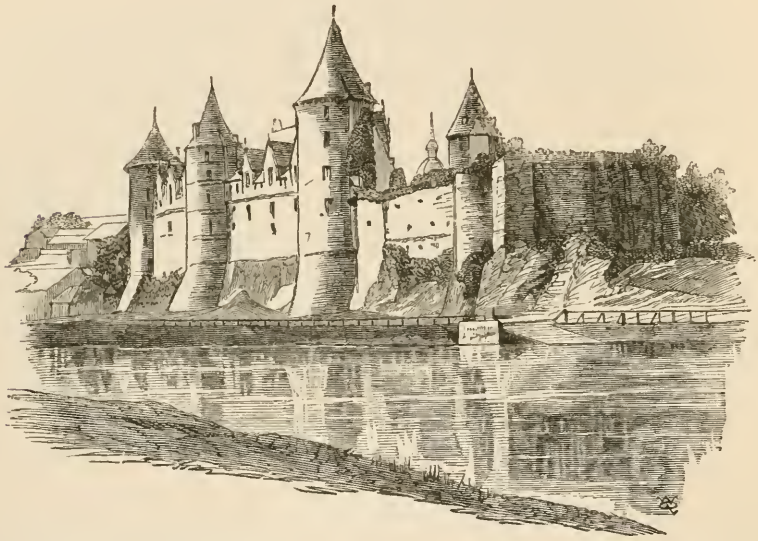
This is all very well, but as the combat was to be fought on foot it seems that the defeat of the English was effected rather by the treachery of William de Montauban than by the valour of the Bretons.

Very soon after leaving the obelisk we come in sight of the tower, roofs, and chimneys of Josselin rising above the trees which border the river Oust, beside which the castle stands, and soon after this we see the houses of the town, built on the side of a hill, and clustering round the famous old castle which commands the river.

There is no trace that any town existed at Josselin before

the beginning of the eleventh century, and then it was called into being by a miracle.

Some two hundred years before, a poor labourer noticed, during winter, as he went to his work, a wild briar still covered with green leaves. It stood just where the present church of Notre Dame du Roncier now stands; and as days went by, and neither snow nor frost seemed to nip or



Josselin.

wither the fresh green leaves, the labourer grew curious, and at last took his spade and dug round the wild briar. Beneath its roots he found a wooden image of the blessed Virgin. As he gazed at it he was startled to see a soft light shining round it; but he raised it, and, carrying it home, placed it reverently on a table in his rude cottage. Next morning he rose early, but when he looked for the image it had disappeared. Again he dug beneath the wild briar, and

again he found the wonderful image. This occurrence being repeated, he decided on leaving the image where he had found her. The news of the miracle spread rapidly even in those times of infrequent communication between districts; pilgrims came flocking even from far-off villages to worship at the briar which had thus become a shrine of Our Lady; and at last a chapel was built on the exact spot, dedicated to Notre Dame du Roncier, and the miraculous image was placed on the altar. Little by little houses gathered round it; and finally, in the year 1000, Guéthénoc, Count of Porhoët, a king in power though not in title, built walls round the little town and fortified it strongly. In 1030 his eldest son, Josselin, called the new town by his own name. Count Guéthénoc built the first castle of Josselin in 1008. It was razed to the ground by Henry II. of England when he besieged the town.

The present castle was built by Olivier de Clisson in the fourteenth century, on his marriage with Marguerite de Rohan, of whose dowry the lands of Josselin formed a part, as the Counts of Porhoët were lords also of Rohan and of Guéméné.

The donjon built by Clisson was demolished early in the seventeenth century with other French strongholds; the ramparts, too, and several of the towers were beaten down. These have never been restored, and great part of the moat has been filled up; but much of the castle remains, and it forms an interesting link in the history of the fierce French Constable, "the butcher of the English."

There are two entirely different aspects of the Château de Josselin—the view from the river, which gives the idea of a fortress, with quaintly capped round towers, and the interior

façade seen from the courtyard. This is a rich specimen of domestic Gothic, with crocketed dormer windows, and galleries of carved stonework, full of fleurs-de-lis, ermines, and a constant recurrence of the motto of the Rohans, "à plus;" also the letters A. V., surmounted by the ducal crown of Brittany. These are said to stand for Alain IX., who is known to have added to the castle in the fifteenth century, and who was the husband of Margaret of Brittany, the daughter of John II., A. V. standing for Alain Vicomte. There is a grand old fireplace in the salon of the château; but, beyond this, the interest lies wholly in the exterior.

The church in itself is not remarkable, but it is specially interesting as the burial-place of Clisson and of his wife Marguerite de Rohan, heiress of Josselin. This tomb once stood in the centre of the chancel, but it was terribly injured at the Revolution, and removed from its position in front of the altar. It has now been restored and placed in one of the side chapels, the walls of which show remains of a painted *Danse Maccabre.* The tomb is in black and the statues are in white marble. Clisson is armed all but his head, which is bare; his armour, and the dress of his wife, are said to have been elaborately sculptured, but the Goths of the Revolution destroyed many of these details. The oldest parts of the church are the chapel of Ste. Catherine, on the left, and the chapel of Ste. Marguerite, on the right of the chancel. This last chapel is said to have been the oratory of the lords of Clisson, where they could assist at mass unseen by the people. On the walls are various allusions to the name of Marguerite de Rohan. The whole of the eastern end of the church is said to have been built by the Constable.

There is also an old church that once belonged to the

ancient priory of Ste. Croix, eleventh century, and the church of St. Martin; but this had been very badly restored. There are several curious old houses, especially one with a carved wooden front near the west front of Notre Dame du Roncier. There is quite enough to see in and near Josselin to occupy a whole day. It is a pleasant walk beside the river Oust to the shrine of St. Gobrien, where patients afflicted with boils and tumours come for relief, and, making a pun on the word *clou*, offer iron nails in little heaps on the tomb of the saint. There is also a drive of two or three hours to the forges of Lanouée, and to Rohan, and the chapel of Notre Dame de Bonne Encontre, built on a rock, by John II., Duke of Rohan, and uncle to the good Duchess Anne. Here, at the high altar, is a picture in which several members of the puissant family of Rohan are represented. The ancient castle of Rohan has been so destroyed that its site can only just be traced. These Rohans were the proudest of the proud nobles of Brittany; they were Vicomtes of Léon, and had besides many other titles; but in the fifteenth century the Vicomte de Rohan betrayed Duke Francis, and fought for France. Since this treachery the name of Rohan is hated by the Bretons. Besides *à plus* their motto was,—

"Roi ne puis
Prince ne daigne
Rohan je suis."

We found that it would take less time to return to Vannes by way of St. Jean Brévelai; and, though it is a long journey, there is so much of interesting research lying round about this part of Morbihan that I strongly advise all tourists in search of stones to take this route; but to see even a portion

of what there is to see, it is necessary to sleep a night at Josselin and to start early next morning and breakfast at St. Jean, more than twelve miles distant. There is a very fine Calvary of the sixteenth century at Guéhenno; it was buried at the time of the Revolution to preserve it from mutilation, but about twenty years ago it was dug up and replaced in its position. The porch of the church of St. Jean is curious; but the attractions of this little town are the menhirs and dolmens in its neighbourhood. One of the dolmens on the lands of Coh-Koët has a capstone about twenty feet long by nearly fourteen broad. About half a mile to the south is to be seen a huge menhir, supposed to weigh 25,000 kilogrammes. Going southward is the chapel of Notre Dame de Kerdroguen—a place of pilgrimage—and near this is a large group of about a hundred menhirs, several of which are prostrate, and several have cup-markings.

One goes on from St. Jean, by a cross-road on the right, to Plumelec, where there is some curious carving on the walls of the church; thence to Plaudren. Here one must stop, for there is a vast lande or moor here on which Monsieur Fouquet says eight lines of prostrate menhirs may be traced, besides broken dolmens and basin-stones, and, towering above all, the huge menhir called Grès de Gargantua. There is another lande to the west covered with remarkable stones, a continuation of the Lande of Lanvaux, and in 1865 excavations were made hereabouts. It is said that beneath one of the menhirs, near a place called Levallon, an ancient horse-shoe was discovered. There are various famous stones still to the west—La Roche des Coupes, La Grèe aux Cerfs, La Roche Bigot,

La Roche Morvan, &c.; but to find these one must take a guide at Kermado, a little village lying near the lande.

From Plaudren we go home to Vannes, and pass the interesting little church of St. Avé, or Bourg d'en Bas, rather more than two miles from the city. In the nave and choir are inscriptions, one dated 1424 and the other 1465. The carving on the wall plates here is most carefully executed. It is rather a long drive from St. Jean to Vannes—about fourteen miles.

MORBIHAN.

THE MORBIHAN, OR LITTLE SEA.

CHAPTER VIII.

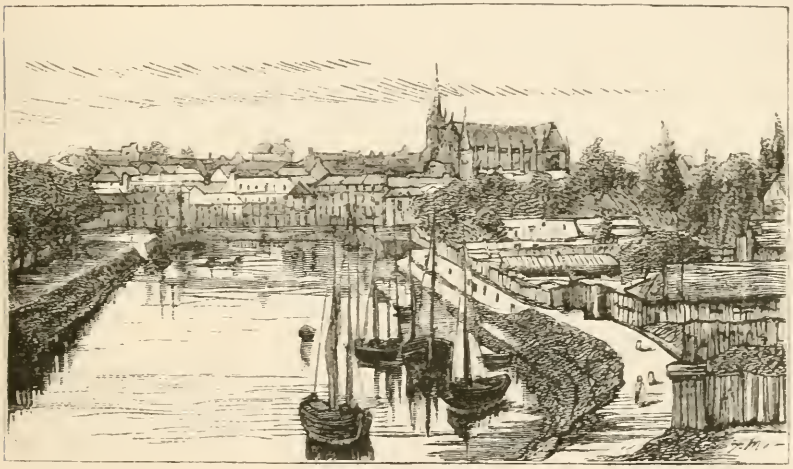
The Islands—Locmariaker—Gavr' Inis.

THE next expedition we made from Vannes was to the Morbihan, or little sea, as the Celtic word signifies. We had been told that this sea is often dangerous on account of the currents which meet from three different points at a passage called the Jument, and in stormy weather do much damage; but our landlord of the Dauphin assured us that, though the navigation of the sea of the Morbihan is difficult, it is not dangerous with a boatman well acquainted with its perilous rocks and currents, and that the boatman he recommended, Jean Picard, was an experienced sailor and quite to be trusted.

In the evening came Monsieur Picard, a big bluff boatman, rather lame, with a frank cheery voice. He was a very picturesque-looking person in his blue and white striped shirt. Unlike most Bretons, he was blue-eyed and fair-skinned; he was very tall and broad-chested, with a handsome pleasant face, and white hair. As he stood very erect,

straw hat in hand, talking impressively of the safety of his boat, the *Anna Blanche*, and of his own assured experience, it seemed impossible to have any doubts. "If Madame will trust herself with me," he said loftily, "she has nothing to fear."

We agreed to go down to the port next morning at half-past six o'clock. We had been advised to see Locmariaker, &c., by land journey from Auray, but we rejoiced extremely that we had followed out our own plan, for a day on the



The Port of Vannes.

Morbihan is one of the special pleasures of Brittany, only that I advise those who may attempt it to take provisions with them in the boat, so as to avoid a tiresome delay at the little inn of Locmariaker.

On the previous evening we had become acquainted with Monsieur Closmadeuc, the learned and intelligent possessor of Gavr' Inis, and a distinguished local antiquary. He had asked us to call on him as we went down to the boat; so on our way in the early morning we went to his house, and

found him up and most kindly ready to tell us all we wanted to know.

Our boat was waiting with a great sullen boy in charge of it. The *Anna Blanche* looked large and heavy enough to insure safety; the rigging and its sails seemed to us the clumsiest we had ever seen. Monsieur Picard kept us waiting some little time in the sunshine, even at that early hour very intense; but the port and the fishing-boats, and so much of the grey old town to be seen there, looked exquisite in the pure, fresh atmosphere.

As we glided down the river or port of Vannes, it seemed to be very muddy. On the left it is bordered by steep banks, on the right by a quay with avenues of trees; but, spite of the mud, there were plenty of bathers as we got farther from the town. In about a quarter of an hour the river widened and divided, and we saw islands before us—one arm of our river went to Vincin and another to Séné, leaving narrow slips of land between.

"We are in the Morbihan now," Picard said; "the land on the right is the Pointe de Roguédas, and on the left is the Ile Bœdic."

We asked how many isles there were, for the lovely blue sea, which seemed every moment to be widening before us, was studded with green hills rising from it, covered in some instances with cottages and trees. Monsieur Picard said he believed about sixty, though the tradition is that there are as many islets in the Morbihan as there are days in the year.

Three communes meet on the mainland to the right—Séné, Arradon, and Baden. The Ile Bœdic, on the left, belonged formerly to the monks. Next on the right is Pen Boc'h. Many Roman remains have been found here, and the

Jesuits have built a church and a college. On the left is the long line of the Ile d'Arz, once a priory of St. Gildas. The houses cluster round the church, which is said to be curious and very ancient. There are 1,200 inhabitants on the Ile d'Arz, chiefly women, the wives and widows of Breton seamen. Farther on the left are Armel and Sarzeau. Facing us, still farther on, is the very green line of Ile aux Moines, the largest of the islands in the Morbihan; it has 1,800 inhabitants. Now we are past the black rock of Pen Boc'h, standing up like some angry monster in the sea, which eddies and foams round it, and we come to a gay château built by some rich tradesman from Paris; on the little green islet opposite, called Logoden, which he has purchased, he keeps his poultry and his oyster-beds. Now we glide past the Ile aux Moines, six kilomètres long. The sun is shining brightly in a cloudless sky, but there is a pleasant air on the sea. As we pass near the end of the Ile aux Moines porpoises are rolling and tumbling in the golden rippling water. A boat pointed at both ends, with a square brown sail, passes us, and Picard says it is a sinagot, or Séné fishing-boat.

For some time we have been noticing the currents boiling and bubbling up from below, but here we get into a fiercer current, and the water bubbles and boils and foams worse than ever. The boy who helps Monsieur Picard looks anxious, and says something in Breton; and as Picard sees that I listen, he turns loftily, and says,—

"Fear nothing, madame; you are with me. The navigation of the Morbihan is difficult, but when you are with me there can be no danger. Go; I tell you there is none!"

He then explained that the water of the "oc-céan," as he pronounced it, entered the sea through the narrow strait

between the points of Port Navalo on one side and Kerpenhir on the other, and that it divided itself into three currents. The first and least dangerous current follows the coast of Locmariaker and the loch or river of Auray; the second passes between the Ile aux Moines on the right and the coasts of Baden and of Arradon on the left, and makes itself felt at Vannes; the third follows the line of coast of the peninsula of Rhuys, and fills the large bays as far as Noyalo. During about four hours the sea finds itself restricted between the coast of Arzon and the isles which lie opposite, and the current becomes fearfully rapid. It is said that no boat dares to brave its violence with sails set.

There are some very curious stones on the Ile aux Moines, a circle of menhirs called the cromlech of Kergonan, and several dolmens, one of which, Penhap, commands a fine view over the Morbihan.

Picard pointed out to us, near Arradon, a green hill, which he said was a very curious dolmen called Erroch. This can be reached on foot from Vannes, and from it there is about the best distant view of the old city.

As we advance southward the currents increase. It is very curious to watch them boiling up from below, and seaming the smooth waters with foam in various directions. The boat rocks and tosses, and every now and then we pass a rock with warning posts and buoys to mark it. "N'ayez pas peur," says Picard, in a fatherly tone. He had talked politics at the beginning of the journey, but his whole attention was now fixed on the chenal or water-path between the currents. He jerks his head to point out Arzon and the Butte de Tumiac, which last makes a striking landmark for the sailors. The green hilly islands around us hereabouts

are covered with small white houses, each on its own bit of land. The Ile aux Moines, which seems to follow us, so long is it, is inhabited by sailors, many of them sea-captains who go on the "long cours," so that the land on the island is cultivated by women.

"Yes, yes," says Picard. "There are widows on that isle. There are often deaths on the sea."

Now we are in the rapid current of water called La Jument (Er Gazeg), where at full tide the water runs ten miles an hour.

"We are only just in time," says Picard. "An hour hence I would not venture with Madame into La Jument; for men it is different." He says this with a superior air, and then swears at the clumsy silent boy, who looks as alarmed as if we were going to the bottom.

As we pass between the island of Gavr' Inis and the dangerous rock called Er Gazeg, or La Jument, we see in the distance, on the left, the spire of Arzon, and on the right the houses and church of Baden.

The water boils yet more fiercely as we glide out of the passage through a smooth glassy surface seamed with ever-bubbling currents.

Now, as we look sideways, far away on the left, is a charming picture—the broad Atlantic and Port Navalo with its lighthouses standing on the brink of the vast stormy ocean. On our right we see the mouth of the loch or river of Auray.

It is the combination of so many opposing elements that makes a day on the Morbihan one of the rare pleasures of a journey in Brittany—especially on such a bright day as that on which we sailed across it. The soft blue sky, in

which as the day wore on faint mist-like clouds gathered slowly; the clear intense sunshine that sparkled everywhere and brightened the colour of the green hilly islets; the many-hued water, and the deep red, brown, and yellow sails of the fishing-boats that every now and then shot past us with a laughing greeting shouted in Breton to Picard, and always answered so as to provoke hearty laughter; the pleasant-looking houses and farmsteads nestling on the island, suggestive of happy simple homes; and then the angry, murderous-looking rocks—Er Meud (Le Mouton), Les Tisserands, and Er Gazeg—with their significant warning posts, and the whirling fury of the black water and its white foam around them, foaming as if it tried to root up these rocks which have wrecked so many a boat and flung so many bodies to the bottom of the stony sea; all these things combine to make an ever-varying interest, but the rocks and their warnings destroy the illusion which has gathered about the pretty homes on the Ile aux Moines and the Ile d'Arz, and send one's eyes and thoughts wandering out to the wide Atlantic, where the husbands of these solitary wives are toiling, or, unknown to them, perhaps at rest for ever.

The tradition of these islands is that newly made widows are awakened at night by the sound of falling water, which drips, drop by drop, at the foot of their beds. The Ankou, a spectre much like the Irish banshee, is also a sure harbinger of death or misfortune. We had been told another tradition of these islands, that the maidens still retain the privilege of choosing husbands after the fashion of the stalwart damsels in the "Coming Race." But Picard laughed heartily at the notion, and said it was made up by "the gentlemen who

want something to fill their books with." "There are many of those tales," he added.

Presently he points over his shoulder. Facing us is an island with a tower at the corner, built on a rock; and now, as we turn to the right, we see the white houses, the long low shore, and the church of Locmariaker.

Our clumsy silent sailor-boy, who has scarcely spoken, now vociferates something in Breton, at which Picard looks behind him, and shrugs his shoulders.

"Ah, we should have started half an hour sooner," he says reproachfully. "We are too late for the tide. It is no longer possible to land at Locmariaker."

And looking forward we see long lines of sandbank covered with seaweed intervening between us and the curious ridge of stones which serves as a pier to Locmariaker. The water in the channels between these lines is too shallow to float our heavy boat, so we land on a great heap of seaweed, and make our way across the mud and over some blocks of granite to firm land.

There is a strange weird desolation in the aspect of Locmariaker, or Lieu de la belle Marie, as its name signifies. Everywhere are broken dolmens, fragments of menhirs; the granite houses are few, and have a poverty-stricken look. The place seems as if it had known better days. Monsieur de Fréminville considers that it occupies the site of the ancient Dariorig, the capital of the Veneti in the time of Cæsar, but the absence of fresh water seems to prove that no large city could have existed here. There has, however, been decided evidence found, in the shape of tiles, bricks, coins, &c., that there was once a Roman station.

It is a most dreary spot, with scarcely a tree to break

the desolate waste strewn with granite remains; remains, too, of the strangely impressive character to which by this time our eyes had grown accustomed, though the mystery which surrounds their origin is so full of awful surmise that a sort of superstitious terror makes one shrink from them. What was their purpose, and who set them up?—for their weight is stupendous; the great menhir is computed to weigh 250,000 kilogrammes (more than 500,000 pounds).

Antiquaries and savants of all nations wrangle and argue, and yet come to no assured conclusions; and if, indeed, these stones have never witnessed human sacrifices, still they have held the bodies of those departed. And one goes on to wonder who were these departed chiefs and heroes, and with what strange heathen rites have they been interred. Weird scenes of incantation may have been enacted round about the grey stones that lie scattered on the rocky shores of the little sea.

One hypothesis is that Carnac and its surroundings cover the site of a huge temple and burying-place, and that the great menhir of Locmariaker stood at the extreme end of this array of stones as a symbol of worship.

On our way from the landing-place we passed the entrance of the huge tumulus of Mané-er-H'roëck, or Montagne de la Fée, but we found that to see it we should have to go to the Mairie for the key, and we had heard at Vannes that the dolmen or grotto within is inferior in interest to the others.

At the museum at Vannes we saw a collection of interesting objects found when the tumulus was opened in 1863. The celts are admirable and very numerous, but there was a total absence of any human remains. Monsieur Fouquet seems to think that these have been destroyed by the rain

which penetrated through the earth of the tumulus. The most surprising part of these excavations is that they should not have been attempted before, for the height of some of these tumuli, one would have thought, must have suggested the presence of a tomb or temple. Close to the Mané-er-H'roëck are two fallen menhirs.

The church stands in the midst of the village, but the interior has been smothered with whitewash.

We took a guide at the inn; but, though this saves time, I think it is pleasanter to seek for oneself, especially as we found some trouble in staying as long as we wished to examine the stones. Our guide took us north of the village into a waste field, to see a large half-buried dolmen, called Be-er-Groah. The capstone is enormous; twenty-seven feet long and more than fourteen feet wide. Mr. Lukis says that some of the supports are sculptured, but we did not notice this. The colour of these stones is charming. In the same field is a prostrate menhir at least twenty feet long. Then we went along a new road and turned into a waste overgrown with furze on the right, where we came first to the wonderful menhir, Men-er-H'roëck (Pierre de la Fée), lying like a monstrous giant among the furze. It is now broken into four pieces; but it must have been, when erect, more than sixty-seven feet long, thirteen feet wide, and about seven feet in thickness. It is supposed to have been once erect, and to have been struck by lightning and broken in the fall, or it may have been broken before it was set up, or purposely destroyed in the seventh century, when an edict of the Council of Nantes decreed that all objects which ministered to the superstition of the people should be removed. One wonders how such a colossal

block of stone could have been set up. This menhir, it is said, would weigh 250,000 kilogrammes.

Very near to this wonderful menhir is the magnificent dolmen called Dol-ar-Marc hadouan (Table des Marchands). It is also called Table de César, although it certainly must have been here long before Cæsar came to Brittany. It is raised about eight feet from the ground, though still partially sunk in a circular barrow. The capstone is very fine, nearly twenty feet long and about thirteen feet wide. It is supported by three menhirs only; on the face of the northern support

Table des Marchands.

are some curious sculptures and series of lines in relief. We scrambled down underneath this wonderful misshapen stone table, and looking up saw that in the centre of the huge capstone is the figure of a large stone axe in its handle. I managed, with assistance, to scramble on to the top of the dolmen, and was repaid for the trouble by the view over the Morbihan, and over the weird, desolate village of Locmariaker, grey and colourless, the only relief to the eye being in the bright costumes of the women. Many of the younger ones wore red skirts and creamy-coloured flannel aprons,

tied twice across the back of the skirt; their white calico caps had long lappets like those at Vannes. The men seemed to be fishers.

From the great dolmen we went, still northward, to what is called Mount Helleu, or the Mané-Lud. This seems to have been a very extensive group of stones, and is thought to have been a celebrated place of burial. The tumulus measures 260 feet in length, and the great dolmen at the western end is still half-buried. The largest capstone is broken in two, but is nearly thirty feet long. The supports and the floor stone are both carved. When the tumulus was first opened there was found, at its eastern end, a row of menhirs set side by side, on five of which was set a horse's head, and in the centre a heap of stones enclosing a small grotto, built of stone and vaulted with slabs. At one end steps lead down into a sort of gallery with menhirs on each side, set close one against another. In the midst of this is the little closed grotto or crypt, in which were found human bones, some of which had not been burned, wood ashes, a fibrolite axe, a fragment of quartz, and some broken pottery. The tumulus was called the Mané-Lud, or hill of ashes, because the dried mud of which it is composed, and which has been frequently excavated, was at first mistaken for ashes.

Not far from this is the cemetery, on the site of a supposed ancient amphitheatre, where many Roman remains have been found.

Farther down the peninsula southward is the curious ruined dolmen of Les Pierres Plates. It is very long, and the passage is bent. Some of the supports of the dolmen are carved, but in opening it much injury has been caused

by removing the surrounding earth. Monsieur de Fréminville gives an interesting account of its original appearance.

It is said that the whole elevation on which the chapel of St. Michel stands is full of Roman foundations called Er Castel, although no longer visible. There are still several dolmens and menhirs scattered about this long narrow strip of land, lying between the mouths of the two rivers Crach and Auray. It seems best to visit Locmariaker from Vannes, because one thereby explores the Morbihan and has afterwards the satisfaction of examining in detail in the museum the wonderfully interesting relics found at the Mané-er-H'roëck, &c.; but the tide hurries one away too quickly, and it is really worth while for those who care for these strange weird stones to visit them again by land from Auray.

The tide warned us not to linger, and we went to the very primitive pier, as desolate as the rest of the village, and soon saw our boat coming across from the point we had landed at. The long lines of seaweed had disappeared, and the water washed over the ridge of stones, so that it was easy to get on board. As we rowed away, Locmariaker looked much more attractive than when we approached it. The wind had risen, and we found that there would be some difficulty in landing at Gavr' Inis on account of the currents. We had to tack frequently to avoid being drawn into the fiercest of these. Even as we approached the seething edge our boat was whirled round and round. We seemed to circle the *chenal* or water-path between the island and La Jument. Finally, having gone completely round the green hill which rises abruptly from the water crowned by its huge tumulus and fringed by jagged tongues of granite, we

glided into a little creek in front of Monsieur Closmadeuc's house, and scrambled over a heap of loose slippery rocks to firm land. Our boatman went to find one of the farm labourers to guide us; the farmer who lives on the island has charge of the monument, and expects half a franc each for permission to see it. While we waited we climbed up to the top of the hill, and had a grand view over the Morbihan, with the peninsula of Rhuys on the left and Locmariaker on the right. Beyond was the tumulus of St. Michel, at Carnac, and facing us the Atlantic. Presently our guide appeared. He was a wild-looking fellow, and wore a loose white flannel jacket and trowsers and a battered straw hat, his open shirt displaying his red hairy chest. He passed us quickly, and then beckoned us down into a sort of cutting in the side of the mound. This was the entrance to the grotto, and we were very sorry we had not each brought a candle, for although our guide lighted one with a flint and steel from one of his bulging pockets, its light was not sufficient for the close examination we wished to make of the interior. We had come away from Locmariaker deeply impressed with the power and wonderful resources of the people who had erected these monstrous monuments; but when we entered the grotto of Gavr' Inis we felt that it surpassed all we had seen. We entered at first a long narrow gallery, nearly five feet wide and about forty feet long; on each side are strangely carved menhirs placed closely side by side, and overhead are large flat blocks or dolmens; it is also paved with slabs of granite. This passage opens into a grotto about seven or eight feet square, and nearly six feet high. The roof consists of one immense stone, more than twelve feet long by nine feet in width. At

this end, on one side, there is a small triangular opening which admits some light, and which led to the discovery and excavation of this marvellous grotto in 1832. The walls consist of eight menhirs most strangely carved and ornamented with curving lines. On one of them, at the extreme end on the left, are two rings carved out of the stone with hollows underneath; the hand may be passed through the rings.

Grotto of Gavr' Inis.

It has been supposed that human victims have been tied to these rings; but as when the tumulus was opened it contained no relics, it is evident that it must have been previously visited, and therefore all is conjecture.

These carved stones of Gavr' Inis are superior to any hitherto discovered in Brittany. There is a facsimile of one of the stones in the museum at Vannes, but it does

not give any idea of the variety of these strange designs, which must have been executed with stone implements, for among all the relics found in the grottoes within the tumuli of this period there has not been found any iron instrument. Besides the so-called serpents and the rings, there are celts, and the strange waving lines are said to resemble the tattooing used in New Zealand.

Another overwhelming feature of the grotto of Gavr' Inis is that some of the stones are of a substance totally unlike the granite of which the island is composed, and when one sees the enormous size and weight of the stones, and reflects on the currents which surround the island and the difficulty of landing there, it is impossible to imagine how these ponderous masses were brought over from the mainland and carried to the top of the hill, unless, indeed, as Mr. Lukis suggests, both Gavr' Inis and the Ile Tissérand were once parts of the mainland. Monsieur Closmadeuc has written a little pamphlet, "Gavr' Inis et son monument," which is to be bought at the farmhouse, where visitors are expected to sign their names. Formerly there was a crucifix to be seen here which was found on the island, but it has been removed to Vannes.

The sun was sinking and day was going, but it was still so lovely on the water that we were unwilling to return to Vannes. The green islets looked yet more exquisite in this soft warm light; and when we came to Roguédas, or Roh-Gueldas, we drew close in shore, and lay in the little bay while one of our party landed to bathe.

The yellow banks, crowned with fir-trees, rise up steeply above the dark rocks, which run out like brown tongues into the sea; the water comes rippling on to the yellow

sand which fringes this beautiful little bay. Presently a priest appeared on the right climbing over the dark brown rock, and springing from one point to another; and in their present glistening and slippery condition this was perilous. Picard took off his hat and addressed the priest as Monsieur l'Abbé. "Monsieur is one of the Jesuits," says Picard. "I told Monsieur et Madame they had a seminary at Penboc'h."

This bay of Roguédas is a lovely nook; just now the water is brown and green with the reflections from the pine-trees above.

Now we pass Bœdic; and here we are again in the Vannes river. The river is full of bathers, who do not seem to mind the mud; and we reach the port about half-past six, having spent nearly twelve delightful hours on the islet-studded little sea.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER IX.

Ste. Anne d'Auray—The Chartreuse—Auray.

THERE is enough to see in the country round Vannes to fill a volume; it is better, therefore, just to indicate some of the remaining localities which possess interest for the diligent traveller. The shores of the Morbihan, Arradon, the dolmen of Er-roch, Lodo and its Roman remains, the view of the sea itself from Roguédas, the Ile aux Moines with its curious barrows, and the Ile d'Arz, are all worth a visit; and many other excursions may be made.

For picturesqueness of effect and beauty of colour, perhaps the most charming part of a stay at Vannes is to be found in evening walks round the old town walls beneath the long rows of tall poplar-trees, which make a fringe beyond what remains of the moat. In that delicious vague light the houses, built here and there on the old wall, lose their modern trite aspect, and are in harmony with the hoary machicolations beside and beneath them: there is light enough to show the green of the vines and fig-trees in the gardens below—a light which sometimes concentrates itself on large creamy magnolia blossoms, relieved by the

blackness of their leaves—while under the avenues groups of white-capped Breton girls and matrons move noisily on their wooden shoes, and talk softly in an unknown tongue, sometimes bearing on their heads the exquisitely shaped brown and red pitchers we had already noticed at Guérande, and which are evidently a specialty of Southern Brittany, for in the north they are not to be found.

We drove by way of Ste. Anne, or Kanna, to Auray, for there is much worth seeing on the road. The road is really the ancient Roman way; and about two miles from Vannes is a little chapel of the fifteenth century, dedicated to Notre Dame de Bethléhem. Inside the chapel, beside the altar, is a picture representing the miraculous origin of the building.

During the Crusades one of the lords of Garo, being taken prisoner by the Saracens, was shut up in a chest with his squire, and ordered to be thrown into the sea; the chest was fastened up, but the lord prayed earnestly for deliverance, and vowed to build a chapel in honour of the blessed Virgin at Garo if she would deliver them from death. Suddenly the squire became aware of the crowing of a cock. "It is the voice of a cock of Garo," he said; and they both cried out till some peasants, attracted by the noise, came and released them. The first chapel, built on the spot where the chest was found, was much older than the present building.

A little beyond Béléan, as the village near the chapel is called, and on the left of the road to Mériadec, in a little wooded valley, are some ruins of the Château of Garo. The old Roman road is to be traced sometimes on the right and sometimes on the left of the present one. On the hill of Coëtsal are four or five basin-stones on each side of the

road. Among these rocks peasants suffering from colic or lumbago go and pass a night in the rock basins, and, rubbing the suffering part against the rough stones, they pray to St. Stevan for relief. The stones of Mériadec are also reported to have healing properties. It is said that on one of the altars in the village church there is a collection of stones with which the peasants rub their foreheads to cure headache.

Beyond Mériadec, on the right, is an upright stone, once a Roman boundary. It was taken up some years ago, and a Roman inscription was found on the part below ground.

Long before we reached it, the golden image of St. Anne, placed on the summit of the spire, shone out brightly as a landmark, and people flocking towards it showed the reverence paid to this famous shrine of the patron saint of Brittany. A pardon had been held there on the previous Sunday, July 26th, St. Anne's Day, and to-day being the octave there was to be a distribution of indulgences, and a solemn blessing after vespers of crosses, medals, rosaries, &c. When we reached the church we found the space round it and the fountain filled with booths for the sale of these objects, as well as of photographs, coloured prints, articles of cheap jewellery, &c.

Masses had been said constantly ever since very early morning; and when we looked into the church we found that there was no possibility of getting in easily till the next service, it was so crowded; and there seemed to be quite as many pilgrims outside buying tokens at the stalls. Women carrying candles of various sizes in boxes, for offerings at the altars, were doing a brisk trade. Silver rings, bearing the image of St. Anne, were in great request, also pilgrims' badges—pretty little bits of worsted fringe and bead fastened to a

pin, and worn on the coat or dress in memory of the pilgrimage.

Beyond the church is the miraculous fountain, where it is said most wonderful cures are effected. Here there was a very busy scene: people went down to the edge of the water to wash their eyes and faces and infirm limbs; maimed and crippled beggars were here in great force, bent on exhibiting their sores and deformities. As we turned to leave the fountain two old women came up with cups freshly dipped in the spring, and frowning at our want of faith they told us, in Breton, to drink, and also to wash our eyes with the water. Some of the beggars were horribly repulsive and dirty-looking, but they seemed to be treated with great kindness and respect.

Across the end of the large enclosure which surrounds the church and fountain is the famous Scala Sancta. It consists of a raised cupola in the centre, under which is an altar whence mass can be said for fifteen or twenty thousand persons, and on each side is a long and broad flight of stone steps. On the right, kneeling worshippers of all sorts—a baker, with his basket full of loaves, was among them—were going up the steps, rosary in hand. By degrees they reached the top, always kneeling, and having kissed some relics exposed there under glass they descended on foot the opposite side. The expression of earnest devotion on some of the faces was very beautiful. An old dame at the bottom of the steps on the left gave me directions how to proceed, and was most anxious that I should perform the ceremony correctly.

After breakfast we went into the church. It is a handsome, modern building of Renaissance period, built quite lately;

from the roof hang large models of three-mast vessels. The congregation was entirely of peasants—the women dressed in black, with a great variety in the shape of their white caps; the men in white flannel jackets bound and trimmed with black velvet, black trousers, and immense high stick-up collars. The elder men had long grey hair streaming over their broad shoulders.

Just outside the porch stood a little girl, who might have stepped out of a picture by Velasquez, with her stiff skirt, and long sleeves, spreading collar, and close-fitting white cap. Each little chubby hand held the end of a brilliant yellow rosary close against her bibbed blue apron, a crucifix hanging from the centre of the beads.

There had been in ancient times a chapel dedicated to St. Anne near the village of Keranna, or Kanna, but this edifice had long disappeared, although in a wheatfield called the Borcenno the presence of some ruined portion of it beneath the soil had always announced itself miraculously. It is said that even so late as the seventeenth century, when it was attempted to plough one special bit of ground in the Borcenno, the horses plunged and reared, and on one occasion broke the plough in their determined resistance to cross the holy spot. It happened that a pious countryman, named Nicolazic, rented the farm of Borcenno. He had always been noted for his religious and exemplary life and for his calm wisdom. He was startled, in the year 1623, by an extraordinary light in the middle of the night, which seemed to proceed from a torch held in a visible hand.

Six weeks later, one Sunday evening, as he was walking in his wheat-field, the same light reappeared without the hand. Some evenings after this he went seeking for some

strayed bullocks, and as he returned home with them, in the same field, near a little spring till then scarcely noticed, the bullocks started and refused to move forward. Nicolazic and his companion advanced, and saw before them a lady dressed in white, and with a soft light shining round her. They ran away terrified, and when they came back, ashamed of their cowardice, the vision had disappeared. But it was soon afterwards repeated frequently, and after a while the lady in white declared herself to be St. Anne, and revealed to Nicolazic that he was to build her a church on the site of the ruined chapel which had existed nine hundred and twenty-four years ago in the Borcenno.

The poor man was frightened and incredulous, and when at last, convinced by repeated dreams and visions, he consulted the clergy of Keranna, they denounced him as a superstitious fool, and, finding he persisted in believing the vision, they threatened him with excommunication. Finally he set to work with a friend, and, following the counsel he had received from St. Anne, he dug up a wooden statue, much mutilated and worm-eaten, but which still could be identified as an image of the saint. The clergy of Keranna refused to believe in the statue, but the news of what had happened soon spread, and crowds of devout persons came from far to behold the wonderful image. This news reaching the ears of the good Bishop of Vannes, he caused diligent inquiry to be made by the Capuchin fathers of Auray, and by other learned priests, into this wonderful matter; and they having convinced themselves of the truth and good faith of Nicolazic, reproved the local clergy for such want of faith, and built first a temporary shelter and then a church for the recovered image. The church, how-

ever, was not finished till 1645. The charge of the church and the fountain beside which the first vision of St. Anne had appeared to Nicolazic was confided to Carmelite monks, who seem to have planned the entire mass of buildings, with the fountain, church, and Scala Sancta within the enclosure. At the Revolution, when the church and convent were sold, the whole erection was much destroyed and injured, and the image, which had been hidden, was dragged to light and burned. A small bit, however, was rescued, and may be seen in the pedestal of the modern statue of St. Anne.

Pilgrimages seem to have been made to Ste. Anne ever since the discovery of Nicolazic; the most frequented are those of Whitsuntide and the 26th of July, the Feast of St. Anne. Among others, Anne of Austria sent a representative to beseech the intercession of the patron saint of Brittany for the birth of a Dauphin. The present church and the Scala Sancta are new erections; the convent still remains, and is now a seminary for priests. At the other end of the village is a large school for girls. We heard that there were many English girls here.

From Ste. Anne we drove on through very charming country to the Chartreuse. Our way lay beside a ravine through which the river Brech tumbles among rocks and pine-trees, sometimes serving to work mills picturesquely niched among the rocks. To the east of the village of Brech is a most singular group of rocks—one enormous boulder seems to be poised on the top of the others. Finally we came in sight of the valley of Kérèzo, so full of tragical memories, Kérèzo having been the scene of the famous battle which decided, in 1364, the fate of Charles de Blois. Delightful memories

of dear old gossiping Froissart and his heroes, Du Guesclin, Clisson, and Chandos, and Beaumanoir, revived at the name of the battle of Auray, and took us back to the great civil war of Brittany.

Duke Arthur II. left four sons. John III., his successor, dying without issue in 1341, Jeanne de Penthièvre (the lame daughter of Duke Arthur's second son), who had married Charles de Blois, claimed and had her right to the duchy acknowledged. According to Froissart, her uncle, Duke John, married her to this powerful noble to secure her claim. But Duke Arthur's younger and only surviving son John, Count of Montfort, half-brother to John III., maintained that his was the better right, and enforced it by the protection of his allies the English, and the heroism of his wife, the celebrated Jeanne de Montfort, who, says Froissart, "had the heart of a lion." Montfort died in 1345, but his widow fought for her son's rights, and the war lasted twenty-three years. It was finally decided on the bloody field of Auray, where, in 1364, Charles de Blois was killed, and Du Guesclin taken prisoner by the young Earl of Montfort's general, Sir John Chandos.

The Lord of Beaumanoir seems to have been anxious to prevent the battle, and went and came between the two armies with propositions of peace. But at last Sir John Chandos told him all such attempts were useless. "The Lord John de Montfort," said Chandos, "is determined to risk the event of a combat. . . . . He will this day be Duke of Brittany, or die on the field."

De Beaumanoir went back to Lord Charles de Blois, and said, "My lord, my lord, by St. Yves I have heard the proudest speech from John Chandos that my ears have

listened to for a long time. He has just assured me that the Earl of Montfort shall remain Duke of Brittany, and will clearly show you that you have not any right to it."

"These words brought the colour into Lord Charles's cheeks. He answered, 'Let God settle the right, for He knows to whom it belongs.' And thus said all the barons of Brittany.

"He then ordered his banners and men-at-arms to march in the name of God and of St. Yves.

"A little before eight o'clock the two armies advanced near to each other. It was a very fine sight, as I have heard those relate who saw it, for the French were in such close order that one could scarcely throw an apple among them without its falling on a helmet or a lance. . . . . On the other hand, the English were drawn up in the handsomest order.

"The Bretons, under the command of Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, posted themselves with his banner, opposite to the battalion of Sir Robert Knolles and Sir Walter Huet. The Bretons of either party placed the banners of their two lords, who was each called duke, opposite to the other.

"Sir John Chandos proved himself more able than his opponents; for he was at the same time bold and hardy, redoubted by his adversaries in battle, as well as wise and discreet in council, giving the clearest orders. He advised the earl in everything, and, in order to animate him and his people, said to them, 'Do so and so; march to this side or to that.' The young Earl of Montfort believed all he said, and followed his advice.

"Among other knights, Sir Olivier de Clisson played his part handsomely, and did marvels with his battleaxe, by

which he opened and cut through the ranks, so that none dared approach him. Once, indeed, his eagerness brought him into great peril. . . . . He received in this affair a stroke of a battleaxe, which struck off the visor of his helmet, and its point entered his eye, which he afterwards lost. He was not, however, for this a less gallant knight during the whole of the day.

"Battalions and banners rushed against each other, and sometimes were overthrown, and then up again. Among the knights, Sir John Chandos showed his ability. Valorously fighting with his battleaxe, he gave such desperate blows that all avoided him, for he was of great stature and strength, well-made in all his limbs. He advanced to attack the battalion of the Earl of Auxerre and the French. Many bold actions were performed, and through the courage of himself and his people he drove this battalion before him, and threw it into such disorder that in brief it was discomfited. All their banners and pennons were thrown on the ground, torn and broken. Their lords and captains were in the greatest danger, for they were not succoured by any, their people being fully engaged in fighting and defending themselves. To speak truly, when once an army is discomfited, those who are defeated are so much frightened that, if one fall, three follow his example, and to these three ten, and to ten thirty; and also, should ten run away, they will be followed by a hundred. Thus it was at the battle of Auray. . . . .

"When the English and Bretons of the Montfort party perceived the French to be in confusion, they were much rejoiced. Some of the French had their horses got ready, which they mounted, and began to fly as fast as they could.

"Sir John Chandos then advanced and made for the battalion of Sir Bertrand du Guesclin, where many courageous deeds were doing; but it had been already broken, and many knights and squires slain. Sir Bertrand was made prisoner by an English squire under the pennon of Sir John Chandos.

"The Lord Charles and his companions kept their ground a long time by their valour in defending themselves. At last, however, it was of no avail, for they were defeated and put to the rout by numbers, for the whole strength of the English was drawing towards them.

"The banner of the Lord Charles was conquered, cast to the ground, and the bearer of it slain. He himself was also killed, facing his enemies, with many other knights and squires of Brittany.

"This battle was fought near to Auray, in the year of our Lord 1364.

"After the total defeat of Lord Charles's army, when the field of battle was free, and the principal leaders were returned from the pursuit, Sir John Chandos, Sir Robert Knolles, Sir Eustace d'Ambreticourt, Sir Matthew Gournay, Sir Hugh Calverly, and others, drawing near the Earl of Montfort, came to a hedge, where they began to disarm themselves, knowing the day was theirs. Some of them placed their banners and pennons in this hedge, with the arms of Brittany high above all in a bush, as a rallying post for their army.

"Sir John Chandos, Sir Robert Knolles, Sir Hugh Calverly, and others, then approached the Earl of Montfort, and said to him, smiling, 'My lord, praise God, and make good cheer, for this day you have conquered the inheritance of Brittany.'

"He bowed to them very respectfully, and then said, loud enough to be heard by all around him, 'Sir John Chandos, it is to your valour and prudence that I am indebted for the good of this day. This I know for a truth, as well as all those that are with me. I beg you will therefore refresh yourself out of my cup.' He then extended to him a flagon full of wine, and his cup out of which he himself had just drunk, adding, 'After God I owe more thanks to you than to the rest of the world.'

"As he finished these words the Lord de Clisson returned out of breath, and very hot. . . . . Whilst they were thus together, two knights and two heralds returned, who had been sent to examine the dead bodies in the field. . . . . They cried with a loud voice, 'My lord, be of good cheer, for we have seen your adversary, Lord Charles de Blois, among the dead.'

"Upon this the Earl of Montfort rose up and said he wished to see him himself, for that 'he should have as much pleasure in seeing him dead as alive.'

"All the knights then present accompanied him to the spot where he was lying apart from the others covered by a shield, which he ordered to be taken away, and looked at him very sorrowfully. After having paused awhile, he exclaimed, 'Ha, my Lord Charles, sweet cousin! how much mischief has happened to Brittany from your having supported by arms your pretensions! God help me, I am truly unhappy at finding you in this situation, but at present this cannot be amended.'

"Upon which he burst into tears. Sir John Chandos perceiving this, pulled him by the skirt, and said, 'My lord, my lord, let us go away, and return thanks to God for the

success of the day, for without the death of this person you never would have gained your inheritance of Brittany.'

"The earl then ordered that Lord Charles's body should be carried to Guingamp, which was immediately done with great respect, and he was there most honourably interred. This was but his due, as he was a good, loyal, and valiant knight."

In memory of his victory, Montfort, now Duke John IV., instituted the Order of the Ermine, and founded on the site of the battle the chapel of St. Michel-au-Mont, which, in 1480, was given to a community of Cistercians, who added a convent to the chapel, henceforward called the Chartreuse. This valley of Kérèzo, therefore, was the site of two great tragedies.

Before reaching the Chartreuse we came to an opening where several roads met, and here begin the associations of the terrible modern catastrophe of Auray. In the midst of this opening is a granite column surmounted by a cross. We left our carriage here, and went up an avenue of firs to a large enclosure bordered by evergreens. This is the Champ des Martyrs, where the unfortunate survivors of Quiberon were shot in cold blood. At the farther end is the expiatory chapel.

One feels doubly sad here, for the tragedy of Auray seems to have been one of those calamities which might, humanly speaking, have been prevented.

In 1795 some thousands of French emigrants seem to have felt that the time had come for the deliverance of France from the yoke of the Convention; and as Brittany was insurgent and the peasants were armed, the emigrants were landed by a British fleet at Carnac, on the 14th June, 1795.

The Bishop of Dol, Monseigneur de Hercé, reopened the desecrated church of Carnac and said mass there, and the peasantry flocked from all parts to welcome the invaders, and if the advice of De Tinténiac had been followed, and the troops had at once been led to battle, victory would probably have followed the efforts of these brave gentlemen, determined to conquer or to die, and seconded by a people outraged by sanguinary despotism. But a chief was wanted to make this revolt successful. Though 17,000 Chouans, hardened by three years of incessant fighting, assembled, the disunion of the officers, the want of discipline among the men, and the incapacity of the commanders, ruined everything.

Ten days were lost in useless disputes, and then, instead of pushing into the interior, so well known to the peasants, they retreated into the narrow peninsula of Quiberon and Fort Penthièvre, and this before such a general as Hoche. Sombreuil and his veteran troops could not cope with the impatience of the raw volunteers, who, however, when dislodged from Fort Penthièvre by Hoche, fought bravely and fell in their ranks. A storm prevented the British vessels from rendering much assistance, or from rescuing more than a few of the survivors. At last, on the mistaken understanding that their lives would be spared, Sombreuil and 950 survivors surrendered.

But as it appears that no real promise was given by Hoche himself, the unhappy men were marched to Auray and shot down in the Champ des Martyrs. Many touching incidents are told of this tragedy. Kerzarion and Soulanges, whose conduct was most heroic, when called to the place of execution, proposed to their companions to walk thither bare-

foot, in imitation of our Lord; and so they did. Sombreuil, Monseigneur de Hercé, and twenty others, were taken to Vannes and shot in the Garenne.

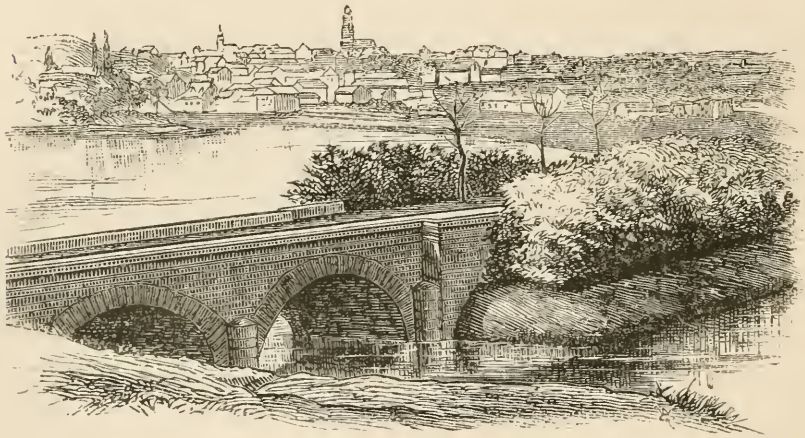
From the Champ des Martyrs we proceeded to the Chartreuse, and went first into the sepulchral chapel which contains the mausoleum of the victims. Above the door is the inscription, "La France en pleurs l'a élevé." On the sarcophagus are marble busts of Sombreuil and Soulanges, and at the other end Talhouët and D'Hervilly; above them is Monseigneur de Hercé, Bishop of Dol; and on each side and on the walls of the chapel are bas-reliefs very well executed.

A poor deaf and dumb man, the guardian of the chapel, unlocked the bronze door of the mausoleum and beckonen us in. He then lit a candle and let it down into the opening in the centre of the tomb, that we might see the bones of the martyrs. This seemed a horrible and unnecessary exhibition, but as the guide cannot speak it is difficult for him to explain what he is going to show. When we left the chapel he took us across a pleasant old courtyard, and gave us up to one of the Sœurs de la Sagesse, who now have charge of the Chartreuse. She showed us the convent chapel and a pleasant dreamy cloister, with oil-paintings on its walls representing the acts of St. Bruno, copied from those of Le Sueur in the Louvre and finally, as we told her we dearly loved flowers, she led the way to the convent garden—a sweet, peaceful enclosure, with seats under a spreading fig-tree, and glimpses through the cool green leaves of plots of artichokes and gourds and the inevitable cabbage, bordered by very dwarf espaliers, and little pear-trees, and standard roses, and the huge bronze

disks of sunflowers rejoicing in the golden blaze into which we feared to venture. There is nothing really ancient about the Chartreuse, but it is a pleasant, quiet retreat, and seemingly full of leisure. The sister smiled when we said this.

"We have always plenty to do," she said; "but then we have no distractions to hinder us in our work."

We felt rested when we said good-bye, and much enjoyed the delightful drive to Auray.



Auray.

Such a quiet grey little town, beautifully placed on its lovely river, one side of which is bordered by grey falaises, which show here and there among the dark trees which clothe them. The pavement of Auray is so uneven that we made as much noise as a diligence would in clattering up to the Pavillon d'en Haut, where we found our kind friends from Château le Salo waiting our arrival; and as soon as we had dined we walked down in the half light beside the river to the château—a most lovely walk.

The first part of the walk through the town was very

quaint. One old house had four stories, each projecting beyond the lower one; all were slate-fronted, the blue slate tinged here and there with orange and silvery white lichen; each story was supported by carved corbels and huge moulded beams, now covered with whitewash. A group of women sat on chairs in the street below, with handkerchiefs tied over their caps; some were sewing, others knitting, but they all looked lazy. Under one chair a cat was playing with a baby. The street goes down steeply to the water, and this adds to its picturesqueness. There was no one walking beside the river, though it looked so lovely in the fast waning light.

The barking of dogs guided us to the château, and we soon found our friends grouped in the cool of the evening in front of their pretty house. As we came back, a few hours later, the moon shone out from dark, threatening clouds, and showed the quaint little town shrouded by the surrounding trees.

There are scarcely any remains of the old castle of Auray, which was taken early in the war by the first De Montfort from Geoffrey de Malestroit. This castle is spoken of in a charter of the eleventh century. The only traces of it are on one of the steepest of the rocks beside the river. It seems often to have changed masters during the War of the Succession. There are several very curious old houses in Auray, and the view from the Belvédère is very remarkable and extensive. It commands the Morbihan, the peninsulas of Rhuys, Locmariaker, and Quiberon, and also the long grey lines of weird, mysterious Carnac. But though, beyond the great beauty of its situation on a river girt in with wooded hills, there is little to see, Auray is a

delightful town to stay in; it is a wonderful little gem of verdure in this desolate, granite-strewn country.

The inn, Pavillon d'en Haut, is thoroughly comfortable and well-kept; its mistress is the very ideal of a landlady in her kind solicitude for the comfort of her inmates, and the servants are well-trained and obliging. Françoise, the chambermaid, with her picturesque flat head-dress, something like that of a Trastevere woman, her quaint dress, and white apron and sleeves, must have been beautiful; she is still very remarkable-looking, and she was delighted to stand for her portrait to one of my companions with polishing brushes on her feet. The other inn is the Hôtel de la Poste, said to be very good also.

Besides its comforts, Auray is surrounded with interesting localities, and is an excellent resting-place from which to make excursions.

MORBIHAN

CHAPTER X.

Carnac—Plouharnel—Erdeven.

OUR friends had arranged to call for us the next morning. They arrived early, and we started in two carriages for Carnac. On our way we stopped to see a large dolmen or stone chamber, called Kerhuen Tangui, in an orchard some little way on the left of the road. The country soon loses its green cultivated aspect, and we enter on a vast expanse of moor covered with crimson heath and brown furze.

It is better to enter on the plains of Carnac from their extreme eastern end, at the opposite point from Mont St. Michel. As soon as we were near enough to the stones, we left our vehicles and sent them on to Carnac. On the way to Kerlescant, on the right, is a long ridge or mound, called Moustoir, with a menhir at one end, but the mound has been filled in, except one chamber. It was explored in 1856, and many curious relics were found in the stone chambers within the barrow; these relics we had already seen in the museum at Vannes. The first lines of stones we reached are called the lines of Kerlescant, but

these do not reach so far as the others—Mr. Lukis says not more than a thousand feet. They consist of thirteen lines of menhirs, which increase in size towards the western end, but very many of them lie on the ground. All about, the ground either displays ridges, or there are bits of fallen granite often overgrown by furze. At the western end are some traces of a circle of stones in a plantation of fir-trees.

We went on some little distance, and came to the beginning of another series of lines with one tall menhir among them. On the left of these stones is the Château of Kercado. We heard that there was an interesting chambered tumulus to be seen here, but we did not explore it. In the midst of this second series of lines, called Kermario, there is a windmill, which makes a sort of landmark. There are only ten lines here, but they are about four times as long as those of Kerlescant, and the stones are larger. Many of the stones are prostrate, and very many have been removed. Outside the last line to the south, and near its western end, is the ruined dolmen of Kermario. The lines end here, and there is no trace of a circle. A few vacant fields have to be traversed before the stones again appear. Then we come to the beginning of the lines of Ménec, eleven in number, and not quite so long as those of Kermario. Two roads cross these avenues, which end at the village of Ménec. Here there is a large circle, but houses and gardens have been built within and around it. Some of these stones are very large, and are the avenues usually described by travellers, many of whom seem to consider that the lines of Carnac once formed an unbroken series of avenues; but the recent investigations of Sir Henry Dryden and Mr. Lukis have proved that each of the three sets of avenues was originally complete in itself,

each series wider at its western end than it is at the eastern extremity. It is to be hoped that the results of the valuable labours of these gentlemen will soon be given to the public.

At first we had felt a little disappointed, so many of the menhirs lie prostrate, and so many have been removed or overgrown by furze and interfered with, as at Ménec, by walls and houses; but as one saw on all sides menhirs, ruined barrows, the whole plain seemingly given up to these strange memorials, the scene became very impressive. From the

Stones of Carnac.

stones at Ménec it is a steep climb to the top of the great tumulus of Mont St. Michel, which stands at some height above the plain. On the top are a small chapel and a Calvary. The entrance to the tumulus is now closed, but it is said to contain a small burial-place of two chambers formed of upright menhirs, and covered with large flat stones. In this tomb or chapel were found, in 1862, nearly thirty-seven celts, some of them of great size and exquisite polish, some of jade, others of tremolite, a stone which hitherto has not

been found nearer than the Italian valleys of the Alps; a hundred and one uncut polished jasper necklace beads; several pendants, some of callaïs; some smaller necklace beads, and other articles of interest. We had seen all these in the Tour de Clisson, at Vannes. Both above and between the granite floor of the tomb and the natural rock were found fragments of burnt wood and bone. These bones had certainly formed part of a human skeleton.

The view from the top is very grand. As one faces southward there is the Atlantic with Belle Ile, a long line in the distance, and the smaller isles of Houath and Hœdic; the river or estuary of Crach; on the left the bay of Quiberon and Fort Penthièvre, the long peninsula recalling sad memories of Sombreuil and his ill-fated companions. But all mere human interest was blotted as we stood on the north side of the tumulus. Below us, and stretching away eastward, the three avenues of grey stone, often prostrate and overgrown with furze and brambles—woefully lessened in number, for all the houses hereabouts are built of the stones of Carnac—seem to stand erect as one gazes. Many of them taper downwards, and the effect in the dusk or by moonlight must be most weird—an army of grey phantoms on their way to the sea. Westward is a long stretch of waste, but we knew that in the distance the long grim lines of Erdeven ended a tract of wild country, silently leading the eye to the far-off sea.

As we gazed, the legend of the people of Carnac seemed a natural outcome of superstition. They firmly believe that St. Cornély, the great patron of cattle and of agriculture, being pursued by an army of pagans, ran away for safety to the seashore. He found no boat there, and being

in deadly peril of his life, he transformed the furious pagan horde who were raging for his destruction into the grey shapeless blocks that now cumber the plain of Carnac and the surrounding villages. But this story does not help the intense interest one feels at Carnac, or the dim mystery in which, after so much research has been spent on it, the history and purpose of these stones lie buried.

There were once from twelve to fifteen thousand menhirs; but so many of them have been destroyed and used for building that probably there are not more than half of them remaining. One theory is that this was an immense place of pagan worship, and also of—as so many ruined dolmens or barrows show—interment, and also, as has been said, that the huge fallen menhir at Locmariaker was its most sacred and eastward point, and marked the grave of the greatest Celtic chieftain. It is singular that the direction of the avenues is from west to east, with the large end or head to the west, and that almost all the dolmens are built in this direction. There are many other large tumuli besides those already mentioned.

A week may be spent very pleasantly at the little inn of Carnac, for this wonderful spot teems with interest, and its wild plain should be seen under various aspects—none, perhaps, so much in harmony with its weird vastness as storm and wind and fast-driven rainclouds.

From Mont St. Michel we went on to Carnac, and saw the curious old church at the beginning of the village, with its quaintly crowned porch surmounted by a huge uncouth stone canopy, said to be carved from the stones of Carnac. On the walls are frescoes representing events in the life of St. Cornély, and in the churchyard is a statue of the saint.

Here on the eve of the Pardon, as evening falls, first a woman comes leading a sick cow, and makes twice or thrice the tour of the church; then she stops before the saint's statue and kneels down, seeming, if one may judge by her jerk of the rope, to try to prevail on the cow to do likewise. Presently, in the growing darkness, a man comes with a sheep, and follows exactly in the woman's footsteps; a boy follows with a goat; then more women and more cows—always circling the church with the same sad, downcast look on their faces. Late in the night they take their cattle down to the well; but they will not allow any stranger eyes to gaze on these midnight rites. Some of our friends watched for several nights, but in vain. Evidently spies had been posted, and directly strangers approached the spot there was nothing to be seen.

The priests dislike these mysterious rites, which are probably as pagan as the reverence with which the people of Carnac, and indeed most Breton peasants, regard the menhirs and dolmens of their neighbourhood. There is a strange mystic link between the sombre, silent people and the weird, ungainly stones, to many of which miraculous powers are still attributed.

From Carnac we went down to a field called Boceno to see the excavations of which we had already heard so much at Vannes. There we had the good fortune to meet with the discoverer, Mr. Miln, a Fellow of the Scotch Antiquarian Society, and he most kindly showed us the interesting ruins already brought to light by his excavations.

In 1874 he exposed the foundations of a Gallo-Roman house having one large and three small apartments: three of these were floored in concrete, one being tiled. But during

Mr. Miln's absence the country people plundered these foundations, carrying off stones, &c. for building; so that the remains here are indistinct compared with the discoveries made since the spring of 1875. These consist of baths, or thermes, with sudatorium, tepidarium, frigidarium, hypocauste, &c. Adjoining these and communicating with them is a villa with concrete floors and mural decorations in red fresco and polished sea-shells. Westward is a small temple of Venus; statuettes of Venus, Minerva, and the Goddess of Maternity, and other curious objects, were found in this. Traces of a wall were found leading from this temple to the baths. South of the temple four other mounds have been excavated, showing walls of houses of rougher masonry: here there is no concrete flooring, and the walls have not been plastered.

As we looked round there seemed to be still many unexplored ridges and swellings; and it is possible that the energetic and enthusiastic explorer may in time discover a buried city close to Carnac. It is strange that the local archæologists should not have noticed the irregular appearance of the Boceno; but for Mr. Miln's enterprise and persevering energy these remains might still be lying undiscovered. But the whole extent of this part of Morbihan is so full of barrows and ridges that there seem to be still discoveries to be made in coming generations. It is a pity that the peasants are so impracticable and indifferent: we were shown the hole where they had wrenched away the leaden tubing between the baths since their discovery.

However, the men working under Mr. Miln seemed thoroughly in earnest; and we felt so interested in their labours that we were sorry not to stay and watch

the result of a fresh excavation just begun. Mr. Miln kindly gave us permission to ask the landlady of the inn at Carnac to show us the curiosities discovered in the villa and temple, and we went on to the Hôtel des Voyageurs.

The things discovered are very interesting. Among them are portions of wall with a design in red fresco bordered by small polished sea-shells inlaid in the plaster; polished stone weapons, bone implements, bronze ornaments, parts of weapons, nails and tools of iron, broken sword-blades, fragments of glass, fragments of grey and black Samian pottery, a quantity of marble and polished stone paving tiles, deer horns of various kinds, bones of ruminants, oyster and other shells of edible shell-fish, and the little statuettes already mentioned.

After seeing these curious objects we drove on to Plouharnel. On the way, on the left near the sea, is the dolmen of Kerroh. Here the largest of the flat or cap-stones has slipped from its place; one end is now on the ground. Going back to the road, near Plouharnel, on the right, is a very ruined dolmen. There are cup-markings on the large stone of this dolmen.

There is nothing to see at Plouharnel, which looks dreary and deserted (though the inn is a comfortable little resting-place for a day or two), so we drove to a very large dolmen on a moor covered with broom and heather. This is a wonderful group of huge stones, called La Roche Guyon. We scrambled down beneath the huge covering stones, and found three distinct grottoes, one of which has a sort of enclosed chamber within it.

These grottoes were explored by the landlord of the

hotel at Plouharnel in 1849, and two gold collars and some fragments of urns were found in them; in the enclosed chamber were human bones, ashes, charcoal, and a good many broken urns.

Our kind friends from Château le Salo had provided an excellent dinner, which we were all quite ready for after our long day's work. It was very delightful to sit on this elevated spot and look across the expanse of rich brown moor, enamelled with tiny flowers and broken by rugged blocks of moss-grown granite, to the sea. The breeze from this came almost too strongly, and threatened to throw our tablecloth down into the chambers below the dolmen which our hostess made a table of.

There was a strange, almost an awful contrast between the mirth of the young ones of our party and the green-grey monstrous stones beside which we sat. A group of barefooted children came and tormented us, chattering their guttural language; but our host poured out a volley of strong-sounding Breton words which seemed to frighten them, for they at once scampered across the moor.

We again examined the grottoes under the dolmen, and then went back to the inn at Plouharnel, where the landlady showed us one of the gold collars found at Roche Guyon, and several celts found elsewhere, in jade and also in bronze.

We found by this time that we had had a hard day's work, and that some days were required to explore the many interesting stones scattered round Plouharnel. To examine them carefully would take several weeks, for the large triangular tract of country between Plouharnel, Erdeven, and Plœmel literally teems with dolmens, menhirs, and unex-

plored ridges. For those who wish to see as much as possible in a short time, the best way is to sleep at Plouharnel, and next day examine on the Auray road the dolmen of Les Grottes de Grionec.

In a field on the left before reaching it is a dolmen, near the village of Runusto; it is now half-buried in earth, but it has been explored. The Grottes de Grionec are very interesting—three chambers almost buried in a large mound. We had already seen at Vannes the curious articles found in one of the chambers in these grottoes. Some of the supporting stones are carved.

On the right of the road is another dolmen, and farther on, on the same side as the Grottes de Grionec but farther from the road, is a dolmen with four chambers, called Klud-er-ier. Although these grottoes seem all to have been explored, yet we heard of more than one who had found curious relics either in the grottoes or in the excavated earth beside them. There are several other dolmens about here, and it is wiser to take a guide from Plouharnel so as to avoid losing time in searching for them.

Returning westwards a little way north of Roche Guyon, on the right of the road to Erdeven are some very large menhirs near a windmill; these are called Pierres du Vieux Moulin. Nearly opposite, on the left of the road, are the remains of the avenues of Ste. Barbe. On the right of the mill is a hill with a dolmen on it called Mané-Remor. From here there is a good view over the stone-cumbered plain, and at the bottom of this hill northward is the famous dolmen of Corconno—an enormous sepulchre, now used as a barn. We heard that it had once been inhabited for ten years by an idiot, a native of Corconno. The

covering stone is immense, 22 feet long. A little way east of Corconno is a very curious erection—a square of menhirs, once 100 feet square; but most of those remaining are now prostrate.

Another dolmen, on a rising ground called Mané-er-Groah, a gallery with two half-buried chambers, and we are close to the long grey avenues of Erdeven. Although this is the eastern end, the first menhirs are medium size. For some distance ten lines can be traced, and it is supposed they

Dolmen of Corconno.

once reached in a north-west direction about seven thousand feet; but many of them lie prostrate, others have been removed. Still this is the most imposing of all the ranges, and seems to have been the beginning of them. On the right of the avenues is a hill, Mané-Bras, on which are two open dolmens and an unexplored ridge.

Mr. Lukis's handbook is a most valuable and necessary help on these excursions; but even with it and the aid of a pocket-compass it is better to get a boy to act as guide;

for here, as indeed throughout Brittany, the country is intersected with narrow twisting lanes sunk between banks, and often not going in the direction which they seem to promise.

From Plouharnel it is an easy drive to Quiberon. Even without the miserable memory of the ill-fated expedition of 1794, and the butchery executed on Sombreuil and his companions, emigrés and Chouans alike shot down in the Champ des Martyrs and the Garenne, there is something very sad and desolate in this long narrow strip of land. It must have been much more of a desert, however, before the Princess Bacciochi planted the pine-trees, which give a less naked aspect to the isthmus, although they rather enhance its sombreness. Just beyond Fort Penthièvre are the menhirs of St. Pierre, a set of prostrate lines which seem to run into the sea. At Quiberon the isthmus widens slightly into a peninsula, with an excellent and sheltered harbour. Some remains of the old church of Quiberon are to be found in that now existing dedicated to Notre Dame de Locmaria. Mr. Lukis speaks of curious cup-markings on a projecting rock near Port Haliguen.

There are many excursions to be made from Auray besides those to Carnac and its immediate surroundings. Locmariaker should certainly be seen from Auray, even if already visited from Vannes, the road between the two places is so full of interest; and there are also many things to see between Locmariaker and Carnac, among others the château of Plessis-Kaër. But, indeed, throughout the whole department of Morbihan one finds constantly a menhir or dolmen, or the ruins of some Roman road or ancient fortress.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER XI.

ST. NICHOLAS.

WE had heard a vivid description of the fair of St. Nicodème, and were anxious to be present at it; but at Auray they seemed to know nothing about it. Even when we reached Baud, and asked the station-master, he shook his head: "Yes, yes, there is a Pardon; but when it occurs—*ma foi*, some time in August. That is all I know."

This was discouraging, but as we saw on the map that St. Nicholas des Eaux looked close to St. Nicodème, we decided to go on there by rail, in search of more definite tidings.

We crossed the Blavet, a broad river here, running through a wooded valley. A little way from the station, up the côte, on the left bank of this stream, we came upon the quaint old village of St. Nicholas. It looks so primitive, so sequestered, that doubtless it is rarely visited; even Bretons seem to know nothing about it, and yet its position beside the lovely winding river, its two straggling, irregular lines of granite cottages, hardly to be called a street, running up from the river, shaded by huge spreading chestnut boughs that cross

one another overhead, the quaint costumes of its people—nearly all the girls and women had distaffs in their hands—and the utter isolation in which they seem to live, give it the attraction of novelty to the traveller.

The solid granite dwellings composing this village were mostly built in twos and threes, with circular-headed doorways, and sometimes only one small square window.

The upper half of the door was open to admit light, the lower half seemed to be kept closed and bolted. Looking into the cottages, we saw that a portion of the space within was given to the family, the rest to the cow-stable; the floor, as usual, was of uneven earth, on which stood handsome *armoires* in dark oak with brass fittings. Outside against some of the walls leant huge brass pans, and brooms made of fresh green boughs.

The sun was so bright overhead that the interiors of the cottages looked very dark, and the absence of white caps among the women increased this gloom, the universal headdress being a rusty black velvet or blue cloth hood, fitting the head closely and coming down on the shoulders in a pointed cape lined with scarlet, yellow, or green. Under one's feet the ground showed that corn had lately been threshed there. Long-legged white pigs and lean fowls were eagerly picking up the stray grains scattered about, gleaming like gold as the sun found its way down to them through the fan-like leaves of the chestnut-trees above.

Exquisite yellow-green vine sprays clung about some of the cottages, and flung themselves on to the thatch as if they meant to reach the chimneys; and these wreaths in their grace and beauty were in strange contrast to the

clumsy-looking, large-featured, coarse faces that stared at us from under the faded hoods of the women and the large

Cottage Door and Women of St. Nicholas.

hats and matted locks of the men. Nearly every woman was knitting or had a distaff.

A little way up from the river, on the right, a path led to the church, and as this was locked we seated ourselves at

the foot of a wooden Calvary just outside it, while a woman fetched the key.

A goodnatured-faced peasant, with her child and distaff, came up shyly, and seated herself beside us. She could not speak much French, and the child, who, she said, learnt it at school, was too shy to talk; but the woman was anxious to learn what had brought us to St. Nicholas. We asked about St. Nicodème.

"But yes, there is a fair and a Pardon there to-morrow and next day; the angel will come down and light the bonfire; he has gold wings, the angel—ah! that is indeed a sight worth coming to see!"

We asked if we could sleep at St. Nicholas, but our friend shook her head doubtfully. "There is the cabaret beside the river," she said, "but—" and she shrugged her shoulders. We had already had a glimpse of this cabaret, and had decided not even to eat there.

The clumsy woman, who had gone to fetch the key, came back with a red swollen face, and large tears rolling down her cheeks. Her Breton was unintelligible, but we learnt from our friend that she had a dying sister, who had suddenly grown worse. It was touching to see the sympathy created among the neighbours as the poor woman went back sobbing to her cottage; but they said the sister would linger some time yet.

A quaint group of women had now collected before the church, almost all dressed alike: black gowns—in some faded almost to green—the square opening of the under body trimmed with broad black ribbon velvet, velvet also round the cuffs of the tight-fitting black sleeves; down each front of the corset worn over the body was a row of silver

buttons, set so close that the edges overlapped one another; the armholes of this corset were also trimmed with very broad black velvet. The square opening in front of the body was filled by a white neckerchief fastened at the throat by a pin; this relieved the otherwise sombre garb, for, except the apron and silver buttons, all the rest was black or dark blue, unless the wind or any other accident displayed the coloured lining of the hood. The aprons were of coarse striped woollen. This stuff is spun and woven by the peasant women out of any woollen material they can get; they will even ravel out old woollen stockings or an old petticoat, and spin the wool so collected into fresh yarn.

The women seemed surprised that we should care to visit the church; the inquisitive traveller was clearly a novelty to them. It is an ancient chapel of the priory of St. Gildas, the ruins of which still exist on the opposite side of the river. The interior of this church or chapel is very curious. Four praying figures project from the four central columns; below the waggon-headed roof is a richly carved wooden frieze, and in one of the transepts this carving is equally perfect and remarkable; grotesque heads are united by a waving border of serpents and dragons issuing from the carved mouths. It is said that the story of St. Tryphena is shown on this frieze. The whitewashed beams, too, are carved, the ends fixed into huge dragon mouths, which project from the frieze. In one corner of the nave we saw a large bell; there was not a seat of any kind in the church; the whitewashed walls were green with damp, and the floor was of uneven clay; there was no sign of daily use about the place, and it felt so damp that we were glad to get back into the golden sunshine outside.

A little way on beyond the church, down a narrow green lane, still on the right, we came to a flight of broken moss-grown stone steps. These led into a square enclosure paved with broken flag-stones and surrounded by ruined walls overgrown with trees and ivy; ferns and grasses springing from the joints of the stonework. In the centre stood a grand old fountain going fast to decay; brambles flaunted great red arms from the ivy-covered top, and between them showed a richly crocketted canopy, surmounting the empty niche of the saint of the fountain.

While we stood wondering whether this had not in former years been the bourne of some celebrated pilgrimage, a woman came down the steps carrying a huge pail in one hand and bearing a large brown pitcher on her head. She was dressed like the rest of the villagers, and had the same awkward, half-savage ways. She glared at us for an instant from under her hood, and then knelt down and filled her pail and her pitcher, but so clumsily, and with such waste of water, that she must have soaked her heavy blue skirts and filled her sabots with the splashings; she wore no stockings to suffer by the wetting.

It was strange not to find a trace of the adroit deftness of the French women in these large-eyed, sad-faced, clumsy village Bretonnes; coquetry and grace seemed equally unknown to them; certainly, as a Frenchman once said, "Il n'y a pas l'ombre de séduction chez ces femmes."

Coming down through the pretty little village again—wondering how it could be so near the world and yet so out of it—we found several women standing knitting at the cottage doors. They were evidently waiting for our reappearance, but not one of them could speak French; a shake of

the head, and a grin showing the long front teeth, and "ja—ja," proved to be the universal answer to our questions. One of my companions opened his book to sketch a group of children perfect in their dress and attitudes, but after staring wonderstruck for a few minutes they all started away in dumb terror.

Now that we were sure about the fête, we resolved to go on to Baud and return next morning to St. Nicodème, for it was evidently impossible to get a lodging at St. Nicholas; the cabaret was woefully dirty, and the mistress pointed out to us with much triumph a huge pile of dark-looking loaves on the filthy floor ready for the fair to-morrow.

We asked if we could have a *voiture*, and she called a sulky-looking lad to answer us.

He came gnawing a straw.

"A voiture!" he said contemptuously. "Oui, Dame, I should think so. If Messieurs et Dame will come with me I will arrange for them with Jean Jacques."

We followed him up the road a few yards. At the door of a cottage sat an old beggar dressed in a ragged shirt, drab trousers, and gaiters. Long grey hair streamed over his shoulders, and his bare chest showed through his open shirt-front.

A colloquy in Breton, and then to our dismay we learned that this dirty old bundle of rags was the Jean Jacques who would drive us to Baud, and that he would be ready directly.

"But is there no other vehicle?" we asked.

The sulky lad's contempt was beyond endurance. "No, there is no other vehicle, and people should think them-

selves lucky to get this; it is quite possible that some one will arrive by the next train who will want Jean Jacques and his white horse, and then where will Messieurs et Madame be?"

After this harangue he ran away, and having settled the bargain with Jean Jacques, whose French was execrable, we walked disconsolately down to the river, Jean Jacques, in a very cracked voice, calling something in Breton, which a woman told us signified that he would be ready in five minutes.

On the hill opposite St. Nicholas is the village of Castennec and the farm De la Garde. This is said to be the site of the ancient Roman station of Sulis, on the road between Dariorig and Vorganium (now Carhaix). Many Roman relics have been found here, and at the foot of this hill, beside the Blavet, St. Gildas and St. Bieuzy made a hermitage among the rocks, which form here a sort of natural shelter. It was from this hermitage that Count Guerech summoned the saint to avenge the wrong done to Tryphena. There is a fine view from the top of the hill of Castennec.

We sauntered on to the bridge and enjoyed the lovely view up and down the river, but the five minutes grew into thirty at least.

At last we heard a shout, and, turning round to look up the road, we saw our vehicle. On inspection it proved to be a miserable little cart, without any springs. Two sacks stuffed with bean-straw were laid across the seats, and a little white horse stood between the shafts.

Jean Jacques was sweeping the inside of the cart most vigorously with a huge besom made of the green broom-plant. He had washed himself, and had wonderfully

smartened his appearance. The upper portion of his rags was covered with a white flannel jacket trimmed with black velvet and small brass buttons; he wore a large flat straw hat, also trimmed with black velvet. But the horse was deplorable—small, with drooping head, looking as if his bones were unset and he was only held together by his dirty white skin.

We clambered into the vehicle with heavy hearts; but no anticipation could have prepared us for the reality. Directly we started the jolting was terrible; and, besides this, the horse had a perpetual zigzag movement which sent us from side to side of the cart, and doubled the length of our journey. I felt no better than a shuttlecock, the side of the cart representing the battledore. We tried to speak to Jean Jacques, but he shook his head imperiously, and answered in Breton, or in French almost as incomprehensible. One might have taken him for a hideous old wizard, with his gleaming eyes and flowing grey hair, but for his religious reverence. At every church and every Calvary we passed he slackened his pace, uncovered, and mumbled a long prayer, after which he always whipped his horse violently, and jolted us worse than ever.

That drive to Baud was certainly "like a hideous dream," though it lay through a picturesque country, the road on each side constantly bordered by tall slender silver birch-trees, through which we got glimpses of the Montagnes Noires. The climax of our torture was reached when we rattled over the stones at Baud, and we got down with thankful hearts at the little inn.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER XII.

Baud—The "Venus" of Quinipily—Pontivy.

OUR drive of an hour and a half had shaken us nearly to pieces; and as Baud seemed to offer no inducement to explore, but looked a sleepy, uninteresting town, we rested at the little inn, Chapeau Rouge, before setting out to see the famous statue of Quinipily. The inn seemed to be kept by a father and daughter; the latter waited on us, and was much disappointed to hear that we could not stay the night, but that we intended to spend next day at St. Nicodème.

"Ah!" she said sadly, "it is so with travellers; they miss much that they should see. Ah! it is a pity not to stay; if Monsieur saw us on Sunday he would find plenty to fill his sketch-book with; no need to go to St. Nicodème for that. Our dresses are something to see as we come out of church. We have velvet so wide"—measuring about three inches—"on our skirts."

Her working dress was very quaint, the broad lappets of her flat muslin cap being pinned across the back of her head so as to give the appearance of a white pyramid; her black cloth dress had the square opening of the body filled

as usual by a white muslin kerchief, but the sleeves were different from any we had seen—wide and open at the wrist, with white loose sleeves beneath them.

She was very piquante-looking. She was much fairer than any Bretonne we had yet seen, but afterwards at Quimper we found the same type of face, and also in Pont Aven and its neighbourhood. She said that though her life had been passed at Baud, and though St. Nicholas was the next station, she had never seen the Pardon of St. Nicodème; "but then"—she gave a deep sigh—"we are five kilomètres from the railway."

She fetched a dark-eyed little boy to guide us to the statue, and certainly we should not have found our way easily alone. We soon left the high road and went across a field of sweet-scented clover and then through a plot of buckwheat, covered with delicate white flowers trembling on their scarlet stalks. Spreading chestnut-trees rose up here and there out of the hedges, giving grateful shade, for the sun was still hot, and we were glad to reach a lofty wood clothing the side of a steep hill. The path we followed is cut on the side of this hill, and we saw the high road at some distance below through the trunks of the trees. These are planted so closely, and are so tall and overshadowing, that there is a dim mysterious light in the wood, in keeping with the strange relic of pagan superstition to which the path leads. Blocks of moss-stained granite show here and there among the trees; brambles and furze border the winding uneven path, which takes its way, now uphill now downhill, between the tall dark trees. It is a singularly lovely and romantic walk. Here and there, where the trees opened, the golden afternoon sunshine

streamed through, lighting up the grey-green trunks and glowing on the crimson arms of brambles as they lay, seemingly idle, but really strangling the seeded gorse. About half-way through the wood is a huge rock clothed with moss and brambles; a niche has been carved in the granite, and in it is a statue of the Blessed Virgin. Little steps cut on one side lead to a turfed resting-place above, and from here one sees the dark forest of Camors beyond the trees of the wood.

We had seen from St. Nicholas the hill of Castennec, on the opposite side of the Blavet, and had learned that anciently it was occupied by the Roman station of Sulis. On this hill, near the farm La Garde (now Couarde), once stood the mysterious statue we were going to see. There is no precise information to be gathered about its origin. Some authorities say it is Egyptian, some Gallic or Roman; others again say that it only dates back to the sixteenth century. So much, however, is certainty—it was called La Couarde, or La Gward; it was looked on with great reverence, and it was worshipped with foul and pagan rites till the end of the seventeenth century. Offerings were made to it, the sick "touched" it in order to be cured of diseases, and women after the birth of a child bathed in the large granite basin at its feet.

But the clergy at last interfered to stop this heathen worship, and besought Claude, Count of Lannion, to destroy the statue of La Couarde. The count therefore caused the statue to be taken from its pedestal and thrown down from the top of the hill of Castennec into the river below; but this dethronement of their idol enraged the peasantry, and when, soon after, abundant rain set in and destroyed their harvest they looked on this as a sign of the vengeance of their insulted

goddess. They assembled in great numbers, drew the statue from the bottom of the river, dragged it up the hill again, and set it triumphantly in its ancient place. According to M. Fouquet, of Vannes, La Couarde was thrown twice into the Blavet; the second time by Count Claude, in 1671, and on this occasion her bosom and one arm were mutilated.

The same dark heathen rites were enacted before it after its second restoration till 1696, and then Charles Rosmadec, Bishop of Vannes, resolved to stamp out this degrading paganism from his diocese. He called on Peter, Count of Lannion, the son of Claude, to break up and utterly destroy the image of La Couarde.

But though Count Peter was an obedient son of the Church, being also an intellectual man and an antiquary he could not bring himself to destroy this relic of the superstition of so many ages. He therefore decided on removing the statue and its huge granite basin to the courtyard of his own château of Quinipily, and forty yoke of oxen are said to have been employed in dragging the huge mass of granite from Castennec to the château. More than once during its passage the soldiers came to blows with the peasants, furious at the loss of their idol. The nature of the worship paid to La Couarde seems to have deceived Count Peter into the belief that the image was a Roman Venus; he therefore caused it to be placed on a lofty pedestal above a fountain, with these inscriptions on the four sides of the pedestal:—

"Veneri Victrici vota C.I.C."

"C. Cæsar Gallia tota subacta dictatoris nomine inde capto ad Britanniam transgressus, non seipsum tantum sed patriam victor coronavit."

"Venus, Armoricorum oraculum, duce Julio C. C. Claudio Marcello et L. Cornelio Lentulo, coss. ab. V.C. DCCV.

"P. Comes de Lannion paganorum hoc numen populis huc usque venerabile superstitioni eripuit, idem que hoc in loco jussit collo cari anno domini 1696."

The château of Quinipily has disappeared; there is now

The Venus.

only a farm; and passing by this we caught a glimpse of the statue among the trees.

We went through a gate, and soon reached a stone fountain overgrown with briars and clinging green sprays. In front of this fountain was a huge oblong granite basin, curved at one end, the dark water within almost choked by

an overgrowth of small star-like yellow flowers. On a tall pedestal rising above the fountain, and surrounded by shadowing apple-trees, was the statue.

Even without its weird history, there is something strange and uncanny in this huge misshapen figure—a large, uncouth, grey woman, about seven feet high. A sort of stole passes round her neck and falls on each side nearly to her knees. Round her head is a fillet, and on this, above the forehead, are three large distinct letters I I T, a puzzle to French antiquaries. The arms are too thin for the body, and are folded, the hands placed one on the other. The sculpture is as rude and coarse as possible, the body is large and uncouth, the bust flattened, and the eyes, nose, and mouth exactly like those of an Egyptian idol; the fingers and toes are indicated by mere lines, and the legs scarcely relieved from the rough granite block.

I confess that I felt a certain awe in the contemplation of this ugly shapeless idol, and there is a malicious, inscrutable look in its face. It looks a fit emblem of dark pagan worship. We climbed up to the top of the high bank against which the fountain stands, and went some little way back. The idol loomed through the trees in gigantic weirdness. She was far more impressive from this distance. It appears that Count Peter caused her to be rechiselled when he set her up at Quinipily, and it is possible that the letters on the fillet round her head, I I T, may have been sculptured at that time, also the stole which now partially clothes her figure. It is this rechiselling which puzzles the antiquaries. Monsieur de Penhouët says she is the work of Moorish soldiers in the Roman army, but we thought she looked like an Egyptian idol. It is certain that she could

never have been meant to represent a Venus, she is too uncouth and disproportioned.

Farther on, behind the statue, we came to another ruined fountain, from which a tiny thread of water trickles silently through the grass. This fountain is dank with huge coarse weeds, and embraced by boisterous, rampant brambles, its dark water choked by fallen sprays and decaying leaves; a gamut of exquisite colour, from tawniest brown to cold sage, lay on or beneath the water. The desolation was complete; there was no link to connect the place with those who must once have lived and died in the old château; and as we turned away from the damp mouldering fountain through the veil of apple-trees before us loomed the grey pagan idol with its misshapen limbs, its mocking smile seeming to assert sway over the wilderness.

The light was growing grey and subdued. An hour later we felt it would be more in harmony with this place, which seems a fitter haunt for bats and owls, and for the ivy and dark weeds near the fountains, than for the glow in which we saw it on arriving, the golden star-like flowers opening their tiny hearts to the sunshine, and the rosy apples moving gently on their grey-green boughs above the yellow grass.

One of my companions stayed behind to sketch, the other to pelt the idol with the apples that lay strewn among the grass. I gravely warned him of the consequences of insulting an idol; but he only laughed, and I walked back through the lovely lonely wood.

All at once I heard a loud barking, and looking down through the trunks and branches of the trees on the steep hill to the road so far below, I saw a huge yellow and white

dog leaping and springing from one rocky projection to another.

He was evidently coming up towards me; and he barked in such an angry way that I felt terror-struck. "This comes of insulting the statue," I thought. I stood still, so did the dog; but then on he came, looking so fierce and barking so savagely, that I called out for help, though I feared my voice would scarcely reach my companions. I managed to stop the dog by holding up my parasol, but he was so near me that I felt as if he must fly at me in another minute.

It was a great relief to hear the shouts of one of my companions, who as soon as he came in sight flung a stone, and the dog ran howling down the hill as fast as he had come up. This may serve as a warning to travellers not to irritate the ungainly stone woman of Quinipily, lest she send her familiar in the shape of a yellow dog to punish the insult.

We had dismissed our little guide, and found our way home through an apple-orchard, the level light gilding the lichen on the old gnarled trunks of the trees. Presently there came towards us from among the trees a man wheeling a barrow, followed by two quaint brown children. One child had a dark blue frock; the man and the other child were clothed in low-toned grey and brown, with some relief in white. The little group, with its sweet background, looked like an animated "Frederick Walker." They were going home to supper, and were soon out of sight among the trees.

We were very pleasantly surprised at the dinner provided for us at the Chapeau Rouge. It was far more elaborate and better served than many meals we had had in more pretentious places. This inn seems a comfortable little resting-place

for weary travellers, and we were sorry we had decided to go on to Pontivy. The country all around Baud is very lovely and full of variety. There is a fountain and also a chapel at Baud dedicated to Notre Dame de la Clarté, and celebrated for the cures worked on eye diseases, and in this neighbourhood can be procured the curious stone called staurotides, which always breaks in the form of a cross.

Locminé is about eight miles from Baud. There was once an old monastery here, but only a chapel remains of this attached to the modern church. In this chapel, dedicated to St. Colomban, is a very curious window full of quaint legends relating to the saint. In the Litany of St. Colomban are these invocations: "St. Colomban, patron of Locminé, pray for us;" and farther on, "St. Colomban, succour of fools, pray for us." It appears that the people of Locminé have been unmercifully rallied about these invocations. Before reaching Locminé, at the door of a barn on the right of the road, are two rough granite figures, said to have been brought from Quinipily in 1804 by the mason Kergonstin. Prosper Mérimée tries to prove that these figures are coeval with the "Venus," and that all are of comparatively modern date; but Monsieur Fouquet, who seems a far more patient and painstaking observer than Mérimée, gives it as his opinion that the rough stonecutter who hewed out these two uncouth figures was probably the man employed to retouch and rechisel the "Couarde" when set up at Quinipily. These last statues are called Les Hercules de Bot-coët, and are really not worth seeing.

About three miles and a half west of Baud, near the Blavet, is the chapel St. Adrien. There are two fountains within and one without the chapel, and all are said to work wonderful

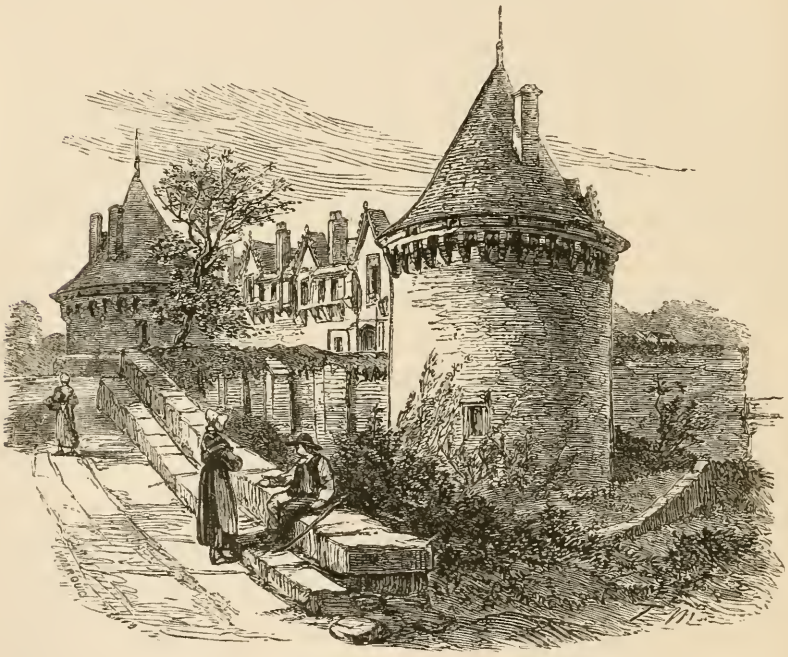
cures. When the water fails to effect the desired miracle, the patient rubs himself with a round stone placed beside the fountain. In extreme cases, when the patient is too ill to walk to the fountain, his shirt is taken instead and plunged into the water. If the collar and cuffs float he is sure to recover, but if they sink he dies.

We heard that the walk from Auray to Baud was very delightful, and that Pluvigner makes a very pleasant halt. Pluvigner takes its name from Vigner, or Fingar, an Irish prince, who fled to Brittany in 443 because he was persecuted for holding the Christian faith. He afterwards returned to Ireland, and being there martyred was canonized by the name of St. Vigner. Near Camors, which lies between Pluvigner and Baud, are some remains of the foundations of an ancient fortress, called Porhoët-er-Saleu, said to mark the site of a castle once belonging to the wicked Comorre, Count of Porhoët, in the sixth century. Is the forest of Camors called after the Bluebeard husband of St. Tryphena?

There is little to see at Pontivy. The old town is full of narrow twisting streets and quaint old houses; its new half, Napoléonville, dates only from the First Empire, but it is empty and grass-grown. It is a clean airy town, however, and full of soldiers, and the Place is immense. A pine-wood appears at one end above the houses. The church is only remarkable for eight curious painted statues at the west end.

But the castle of Pontivy is very fine, and in excellent preservation. It is built on the side of a hill not far from the Blavet. The two enormous flanking towers have high conical roofs with tall chimneys. These towers are sunk in a fosse,

over which a bridge leads into the castle; and all along the top of the curtain wall are quaint dormer windows. The original castle was of very ancient date, and fell into complete decay in the fourteenth century. Duke John de Rohan, a hundred years later, built this castle on the ruins of its predecessor, as if he meant it to be a stronghold for ever. But



Castle of Pontivy.

it is no longer a fortress. Gay wild flowers flaunt on the crumbling grey stones. Instead of soldiers, rosy-faced children go in and out through the dark frowning gateway. Sisters of the charity of St. Louis now keep a school within the old ivy-clothed walls.

On the Place d'Armes is a statue of General le Normand

de Lourmel, killed at Sebastopol. There is an inscription on the house in which he was born at Pontivy. The town takes its name from a monastery founded by St. Ivy, a monk of the abbey of Lindisfarn, in the seventh century. Only one of the old town gates remains.

About four miles distant is Noyal Pontivy. There is an interesting church here, and in the churchyard is the tomb of St. Meriadec. The church of Quelven is also near Pontivy, and is worth seeing. It is a pity that there is not more interest attached to the town to detain the traveller, for the inn, Hôtel Grosset, is good, clean, and cheap.

From our bedroom window a charming scene greeted us in the early morning. At one side was a small farmyard, peacocks and turkeys strutting about, screaming and gobbling, among the humbler ducks and fowls; on the other side were gardens filled with pear-trees and spreading, shady fig-branches; and immediately opposite our window ran a pergola of vines, clematis, and westeria, foliage and blossoms mingled in wild luxuriance.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FAIR OF ST. NICODÈME.

THE breakfast spread for us was one of the most tasteful we had seen in Brittany. Cherries glowing with colour and yet cool with the freshness of morning dew, raspberries with frosted leaves, plums, golden pears, almonds in their lovely green covering, little cakes of various shapes, were arranged in pretty little dishes on a long table, with flowers at intervals; and the meal served, beginning with delicious lobster, was quite as good to the taste as to the sight. We were waited on entirely by quiet, middle-aged women, who seemed to understand their business, and the master of the hotel was also its *chef*.

He provided us with a very comfortable, almost new, carriage and a good horse, and we started early for the Pardon of St. Nicodème, the morning being, like all we had had since our arrival in Brittany, a blaze of unclouded sunshine. We soon overtook carts of all kinds going in the same direction, chiefly long carts with three or four benches or planks set across them; and these were crammed with men, women, and children in holiday costume, the

salient points in which were the white jackets and huge black hats of the men, and the long white *coiffes* of the women. Black was the prevailing colour of the bodies and skirts of their gowns. There were also numbers of men and women on foot, trudging along the road, many of them driving their pretty little cows before them. Sometimes we passed an old woman struggling with a refractory pig.

The fine grey spire of the church of St. Nicodème was visible for some time before we reached it. At last we came to a road or lane on the right shaded by spreading chestnut trees, and our driver stopped.

These Breton side-roads have a character peculiarly their own. In the north they are deeply sunk between high brake and furze-covered banks, along the tops of which is often a concealed footpath; but in the south these banks are lower, and, as at St. Nicodème, huge trees grow behind them, and send their branches across from side to side so near the road that certainly the lofty hooded waggons of Normandy would find no room to pass under the leafy roof.

Our driver told us this side-road led to the church; and, indeed, without the information we should have guessed this, as people were hastening into the lane from all directions. Our driver added that the road was too rough for his vehicle to go over, so we alighted.

The lane was full of strings of people, men, women, and children, hurrying towards the church. We found it necessary to walk heedfully, for the road was channelled with deep cart-ruts, and these were filled with mud and water. At the end of the lane we found ourselves in a bewildering throng of carts, horses, cows, pigs, and people crowded in front of and against the low stone wall that fences in the church and

its celebrated fountain. At the moment a man had quite blocked up further passage by calmly plaiting the cream-coloured tail of his horse: this was so long that it reached across the road, which narrowed as it neared the church.

St. Nicodème is a handsome stone building of the six-

St. Nicodème.

teenth century, with a fine tower and spire; but it is its situation that is so charming. It stands in a sort of hollow the ground rising from it on every side planted chiefly with huge chestnut trees. Under the shade of these, beyond and beside the church, we saw a great crowd of people, all

seemingly farmers and peasants—there appeared no mixture of *bourgeois* element—but before going into this crowd we turned aside to see the fountain. A visit to this is evidently an important part of the duty of the day. Three or four old women came towards us at once with jugs and cups of the holy water to drink and wash our faces in, for which they expect a few centimes. The fountain is of rather later date than the church. In one of the three compartments into which it is divided stands the figure of St. Nicodème; on one side of him a man and a woman are kneeling—they offer him an ox. In the other niches are St. Abibon with two men—one on horseback, the other kneeling—and St. Gamaliel between two pilgrims, one of whom offers him a pig. These saints are all Jews.

Men, and women too, were bathing their faces and eyes in the fountain, and also drinking the water eagerly. It is said to have antiseptic properties. Standing and lying about were dirty, picturesque beggars, exhibiting their twisted and withered limbs and incurable wounds to passers-by. There is another fountain surmounted by a Calvary.

The finely sculptured portal of the church was thronged with these sufferers, some of them eating their breakfasts out of little basins. One ragged child held out a scallop-shell for alms, keeping up a chorus of whining supplication. Among these squalid objects a beautiful butterfly was hovering; a baby child stretched up its hands crying for the insect. The interior of the church had evidently been so recently whitewashed that there had been no time to wash the stains and splashes from the dirty flagstone pavement, and, as there were no chairs, this was covered by kneeling worshippers. On the ceiling the stations of the cross were

painted in very gaudy colours. The high altar was a blaze of lighted candles; grouped round it were some really rich crimson and white banners worked in gold; at a side-altar a priest was saying a litany.

There were most picturesque figures among the kneeling worshippers, and through the groups two girls wandered up and down with bundles of lighters for the votive candles; some old women, too, carried about bundles of these candles. Many of the kneelers pulled my skirts to attract attention to a wounded leg or arm, or to inform me in a whisper that they were ready to pray the Blessed Virgin and St. Nicodème to give me a safe journey if I had a few centimes to give away.

It was so cool within the church that the air felt oven-like when we came out again, although the grey old building was surrounded by huge spreading chestnut-trees. Close to the church, ranged under the green fan-like leaves, were booths hung with strings of rosaries, crosses, medals, badges, rings, and other jewellery; ornamental pins, for fastening the chemisettes and shawls of the peasant women, were displayed in cases. Pretty silver rings bearing the image of St. Nicodème were selling rapidly at a fabulously low price.

In other booths were set forth a store of large, gaudily coloured prints of various saints and sacred subjects. Chief amongst them was a gorgeous full-length of St. Nicodème, wearing the papal tiara, a violet cassock, green chasuble, and scarlet mantle. Over his head, in a golden nimbus, a bright green dove descended on the saint, who stood between a tall poplar-tree and a palm bursting into blossoms of various colours; there were hymns on either side of the paper. A carter with his whip under his arm, the

heavy lash twisted round his neck, knelt down reverently to look at this gorgeous print, and a withered old man leaned over him to explain the words of the hymns, which were in French. To them it was plainly as impressive as if it had been really a work of art.

Farther on, the glen behind the church was crowded with people, buying, selling, eating, drinking, under the chestnut-trees. Here were booths for clothes and crockery, and open stands for eatables and drinkables. An old man was selling sieves, wooden bowls, and boxes heaped up indiscriminately on the grass, for sieves are in great demand at this harvest season.

Near the church, against the ivy-covered trunk of an enormous chestnut-tree, several men were seated with lathered faces; two were being shaved, the others patiently waited their turn. The rapidity of the barbers was most amusing. Two used the soap-brush and two the razor, and their labours seemed to be unending. We thought the edge of the razor could not be worth much, judging by the stiff, stubbly-looking chins. It is customary to let the beard grow some weeks before the festival of St. Nicodème, and then to be clean shaved in the early morning. We came upon many of these *al fresco* barber-shops under the trees in different parts of the fair.

As we walked through the crowd we saw how varied and picturesque the dress of the men was; the jacket generally of white flannel cut square at the neck, trimmed with black velvet, with a row of embroidery thereon and strings of metal buttons; the outside pockets of these jackets were cut into seven or eight vandykes bound with black velvet, each of the points being fastened by a brass or silver button.

The black beaver or felt hats were enormous in the brim, very low-crowned, and trimmed with a band of broad black velvet fastened by a silver buckle, with two ends hanging behind. The trousers and knee-breeches were chiefly blue or white linen, although some were of black and brown velveteen, loose, but without the bagginess so common in Lower Brittany. The older men wore black gaiters reaching to the knees and fastened by a close row of tiny buttons. Round the waist many of them wore a broad, thick, buft leather belt, with quaint metal clasps. This hung so low and loosely that it seemed worn only for ornament.

We asked a tall Breton farmer with bare feet thrust into his sabots what was the use of this belt. "It has none," he said complacently; "I wear it for fashion's sake."

The waistcoat was also white flannel, trimmed with so many rows of embroidered velvet that it had the effect of several waistcoats worn one above another; four or five dozen of silver buttons were set in two rows down each side of the outer waistcoat so closely that the edges of the buttons overlapped. This costume was, perhaps, the most uncommon we saw. The older men wore their hair very long, sometimes hanging over their shoulders almost to their waists; their dark gleaming eyes and thick straight eyebrows gave them a very fierce appearance.

Some of the men were tall, and they all stalked about among the women as if they were beings of a different order. They seemed rarely to speak to them. Each sex herded chiefly in groups apart, except that the men took the centre of the fair as their right, and paced up and down like princes. There seemed to be no curious strangers present except ourselves, and yet they took little notice of us. Even

when we got farther up the glen and more into the crowd we saw no mixture of townsfolk. It was a festival of peasants.

We were specially struck by the face of a fine old man with flowing white hair, but most malevolent black eyes, who stood fanning with his broad-leaved beaver hat a grid iron full of silvery sardines, frizzling and crackling over a pan of charcoal on the grass. When they were cooked he speedily found customers for them.

Close by was a stand covered with huge loaves of buck-wheat bread, which were finding ready sale; and as we moved on we saw impromptu fireplaces in all directions. On one side a huge steaming pipkin hung from a tripod of sticks; from this a coarse *ragoût* of meat and potatoes sent out a not too savoury smell. Farther on a large pot of coffee stood on a glowing lump of charcoal.

And now we came upon booths with cold eatables displayed on the stalls: sausages of all kinds, and a sort of cold meat pudding, in great request, but of by no means enticing aspect, made of chopped meat stewed in a goose skin or bladder with plenty of pepper. Farther back from the main avenue, under the trees, were carts full of immense cider-barrels covered with fresh green brake. A woman wearing the black hood lined with scarlet we had seen the day before at St. Nicholas stood at a table in front of one of these carts drawing cider as fast as she could into jugs, glasses, &c.; and all round her were groups of men talking together, and getting less silent and morose as they drank glass after glass and toasted one another.

A low stone wall, overgrown with grass, divided this wooded glen from the country beyond on the left, and atop

of this wall a pleasant-looking countrywoman in a well-starched, spotless white muslin *coiffe*, the two broad-hemmed lappets pinned together behind her head, had spread out her wares on a gay-coloured handkerchief. Caps, and collars, and chemisettes were displayed to the best advantage in this elevated position. She sat on the wall beside her goods, smiling and chattering with all who passed by, and she seemed to be driving a good trade, though it was puzzling

Cap-seller.

to know how her customers would dispose of such easily crumpled articles in the midst of the ever-moving crowd.

So far we had been struck by the quiet and decorum of the scene. It was really too quiet; there was so little jollity in it, none of the repartee and the merry laughter so often heard in a Norman fair. Men and women alike looked serious and self-contained. The happiest faces were

those of the dear little children, toddling and tumbling about in all directions. Some of these, in their close-fitting skull-caps, thick woollen skirts reaching to their heels, and large white collars, were perfect little Velasquez figures; others wore round hats, set on the back of their heads; almost all had clear complexions, and handsome, large, round dark eyes.

Still farther on we heard a rather monotonous beat of drum. There was a performance going on here; but it seemed only to consist in the explanation, in a drawling recitative, of various pictures exhibited by the showman. Behind this we found ourselves in the cattle-market, a part of the glen where the grass was less worn away and where the trees were more thickly planted. Here the sunshine came in golden chequers and patterns through the broad leafy boughs on men who stood about plaiting and unplaiting the long tails of their horses, and on women who dragged their pretty little black and white cows along, sometimes by a rope fastened to the horns, sometimes by the horns themselves, but quite as often they hurried on regardless of everybody, with the cow's head gripped tightly under one arm, chattering eagerly in Breton.

Pigs were also being hauled about, filling the air with their noise. One woman had got a pig by the tail, and she dragged it squealing through the very thickest of the crowd; another had fastened a rope to her pig's leg, and was coaxing it in a way that reminded us of the nursery story. There was plenty of noise here, rude rough voices and much gesticulation, as the people vociferated guttural Breton at one another. It was difficult to move, too, through the confused mass of people and animals. No one seemed to care or to

look where he or she went—it was apparently assumed that every one would take care of himself or herself; lacking this, there was every chance of being knocked down and trampled under foot by the crowd or the cattle.

There had been an auction of beasts going on under the trees; groups of wild-looking men with long hair streaming over their black embroidered jackets—with larger hats than any we had as yet seen—were talking fiercely about the cattle, with much gesticulation and with flashing eyes. These were Finistère men, from Scäer and Bannalec. We were told that the design embroidered on the back of their coats signified the Blessed Sacrament; they looked far more fiery and savage than the white-coated men of Morbihan, but they were less sullen and silent.

There was abundant variety, too, in the costume of the women. Gorgeous green gowns (black and grey were the predominant colours), trimmed with broad black velvet, both on the skirt and on the sort of double body which seemed to answer to the coat and waistcoat of the men; the black velvet covered with gold and scarlet embroidery. The head-gear of St. Nicholas, with the brilliant green, scarlet, or yellow linings, was most abundant; but there was besides a large proportion of white *coiffes* and caps and quaintly shaped collars. Most of the women wore gold or silver hearts and crosses depending from a velvet ribbon round the throat. Few of them showed any hair on their foreheads; and it is perhaps this usage of concealing the hair, added to the large melancholy eyes, which gives so solemn an expression to the face of the Bretonne peasant. They tell you that they have their hair cut off because there is no room for it under the *coiffe;* besides, once married, they

do not consider it right to show their hair; in reality, they sell it to the travelling barber who will give the best price for it.

Wherever space could be found among the trees long booths were set up, some of them garlanded with green boughs. Looking through one of the low-arched openings of the booths, we saw a striking rustic picture—tables reached from one end to the other, covered with bottles and glasses, hard-featured men and women sitting alternately on each side. The men were evidently drinking cider freely, but at present, at any rate, the women had empty glasses in front of them, and were listening to the conversation their lords held with each other across the table. With some exceptions, they all looked as serious as if the fête were a funeral.

Formerly all the cattle of the neighbourhood, decorated with ribbons, were led in procession to the church to be blessed, drums beating and banners flying; but this custom seems to have been given up, though some animals are still offered to St. Nicodème, and these are sold afterwards at higher prices than the rest, as the presence of one of them in a stable is supposed to bring luck.

On the eve of the festival the penitents go in procession, barefooted and bearing lighted candles, and receive absolution; it is to be hoped that these were the visitors who left the fête early, for by three o'clock most of the men had been drinking hard.

Time was going fast, and we began to be curious as to the hour of the descent of the angel, which our friend at St. Nicholas had said was the best part of the fête. Asking a smart young girl who sold lemonade, we learned that it would come down after vespers, and we made our way back through the crowd to the rising ground on the left of the

church. Already the cider was beginning to take effect: there was much more noise and chatter; the men stood about in groups, in eager discussion, using rapid, vehement gesticulation. The heat had become overpowering, the sun seemed to scorch us as we walked, but the chestnut trees on this hill-side were even larger than those below, and so long as we could remain under them there was dense and most refreshing shade.

We found the interest was now concentrated on a large open space around the Calvary which stood on the rising ground. Close beside it was a tall pole, with a large heap of brushwood piled high up round its base. A man was going up a ladder placed against this pole, fixing on it at intervals hoops covered with red and blue paper; finally he fastened a painted flag on the top of all.

Presently we saw that a cord was being lowered from the top of the lofty church tower. Several eager watchers among the chestnut trees below secured the end of this cord when it reached the ground, and brought it in triumph to a post at the foot of the pole, about one hundred yards from the church. The cord was fastened securely below a square box set on the top of the post, and from this time a breathless suspense hung over the swaying, rugged-looking crowd —that is, over the elders and the children; the younger men and women seemed to choose this time for walking up and down, in and out, through the groups of gazers, sending saucy or sheepish glances at one another, without the exchange of any words.

We were specially amused in watching three young, pretty, and very gaily-dressed girls, who walked up and down, looking neither right nor left, but evidently considering

themselves the belles of the fête. A little man with twisted legs, with a joke for every one, seemed in universal favour among the women. He was no doubt the *bazvalan*, the tailor match-maker of the neighbourhood. We saw his cunning dark face and keen black restless eyes in all parts of the throng, and, to judge by his long colloquies with some of the older matrons, he was doing a profitable business, for it appears that Breton peasants' marriages are still made by means of this worthy. He was almost the only man who seemed to talk much to the women.

All at once the bell rang out for vespers; most of the women and children flocked into church, followed by a few of the men.

Meantime the throng of men about us increased—those who had been drinking in the booths came across to the Calvary, and we had full opportunity of studying their dark remarkable faces.

There is no need for the Breton to disclaim, as he does, any kindred with the French. A special nationality is stamped on his face. These peasants, especially the men of Morbihan and Finistère, are a race apart; with their long dark deep-set eyes gleaming from under thick dark eyebrows, their tangled hair spreading over the shoulders and often reaching almost to the waist, their dark skins and long straight noses, and their quaint costume, they are wholly un-French. They are taller, too, and larger framed than the generality of Frenchmen are; they look more powerful in every way, and they have a seriousness, amounting to dignity, which is wholly distinctive.

Even when he is drunk, and this is a too frequent occurrence, the Breton strives to be self-controlled and quiet.

When he is sober, there is a touch of the North American Indian in his stolid indifference, and also in the apparent contempt with which he regards his spouse; for the Breton peasant-woman, spite of her rich costume on Sundays and gala days, is after marriage a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water, often the slave of her drunken unfeeling husband. Possibly this slavery takes away self-respect, and gives to the married Bretonne the clumsiness and half savage manner which must strike the stranger as much as her want of gaiety and light-heartedness. There are, of course, abundant exceptions, and in Finistère the women are handsomer and less sad-looking than in Morbihan.

One never sees in Brittany a young man and woman strolling together in the evening. Only a few days of courtship seem to be allowed before marriage to the Bretonne peasant. After marriage her slavery begins. We heard that in many places, notably at Scaër and its neighbourhood, the old betrothal and marriage customs, so graphically described by Brizeux, Souvestre, and other writers, still exist.

All at once there was a stir among the crowd. It had been impossible to stand waiting near the pole exposed to the full blaze of the sun, so we had taken shelter under the huge chestnut trees; we ventured into the sunshine now, for the excitement was contagious. Almost before we reached the pole, we saw coming down the cord a pretty little angel about three feet high, with bright golden wings. It stood an instant beside the post to which the rope was fastened, and then went up again and remained stationary outside the tower, the only sound heard in the breathless silence of the crowd being the click click of the wheels on which the little creature moved.

This, we learned, was a trial descent, it being necessary to make sure that the machinery acted properly before the real descent took place. It was to happen as soon as vespers was said. We stood our ground bravely for another quarter of an hour in the scorching sunshine. The heat has grown so intense that the sticks and furze-bushes piled up round the pole in readiness for the bonfire feel as if they came out of an oven. Suddenly the bells peal loudly, and a glittering procession comes singing out of the church, with lighted candles, crosses, and crimson and gold banners. First come the choristers, then the priests, and then a long train of men and women, chanting as they come.

As soon as the procession has circled the hill, it halts. A gun is fired from the church-tower, and down comes the pretty little angel, this time very rapidly, its bright wings flashing in the sunshine. It holds a match in one outstretched hand, and touches first the box on the post, and then the bonfire. A peasant, with many coloured ribbons in his hat, who has been making all ready, helps the angel's work. There is a loud, deafening explosion, then a discharge of squibs and crackers from the box, and then the furze and faggots of the bonfire ignite and blaze fiercely. The heat has made the piled-up faggots like touchwood; the sudden blaze is electrifying; long tongues of red flame leap up till they reach the first of the hoops on the pole. Bang, bang, bang! and off go the fireworks of which they are composed. The noise is tremendous and ear-splitting, and the flames go leaping higher and higher till all the suspended fireworks, including the flag at top, have exploded, blazing and banging, and dispersing themselves in shreds of flying fire above the heads of the excited crowd.

It was somewhat alarming to see the towering body of fierce red flame, brilliant even in the powerful sunshine, one moment carried up as if to reach the sky, next swooping sideways in pursuit of the flying shreds of burning paper that flew through the air; and in the midst of the stifling heat and smoke and din—for the crowd had found a universal voice at last—the little golden-winged angel mounted quickly to the steeple again, followed by strange uncouth howls of delight, which seemed to be the approved method of expressing satisfaction.

It was a good moment to study these stolid, self-contained Bretons; moved out of the calm reserve which to most of them must be a second nature, the faces were wonderfully wild and expressive. The long fierce black eyes gleamed with delight, and no doubt, in some, with religious fervour—and as the bonfire blazed higher and higher, casting a lurid glare on all around, most unreal and theatrical in effect—the whole expression of some of the faces changed.

The scene seemed made for a painter—these tall black-browed men, with their powerful savage faces and long streaming hair, their white flannel coats and broad black hats—all faces upturned to the red ever-mounting flame; every now and then some man or boy dashed frantically almost into the swaying fire and snatched one of the flying shreds of burning paper to preserve it as a relic; at a little distance behind the men, keeping apart, were groups of women in their quaint costume, some wearing snowy caps, others with the sombre *coiffes* of St. Nicholas, with their bright linings. Beside the tall Calvary, its stone steps thronged with little awe-struck, bright-eyed children, was the procession of clergy and choristers; in front the

blazing bonfire, all around the huge-spreading boughs of the chestnut-trees crowning the green hill and circling round its base; and below in the distance, seen through the spreading boughs, the old grey church tower and spire towered over the booths grouped around.

The heat of the sun was still so intense, though evening was coming on, that the men could scarcely bear to keep their hats raised above their heads as the procession wound once more slowly round the Calvary and returned to the church, singing as they went.

Perhaps the most striking effect of the whole scene was the contrast between the strong, wild excitement, betrayed more in look and gesture than by any prolonged outcry, and the trumpery cause that aroused it. It was difficult to believe that some of these excited creatures, plunging madly to secure charred fragments of red and blue paper, could be the grand, dignified-looking men we had been watching all the morning. Possibly the mixture of cider and religious enthusiasm helped somewhat to this result.

We heard that the fête would last two days; but as there seemed to be no preparation made for either dancing or wrestling, we preferred to leave St. Nicodème before dusk, for more drinking was plainly to wind up the proceedings of the day, and it was evident that the greater number of the crowd would spend the night on the ground, either in the carts which showed everywhere among the tree trunks, or on the grass under the chestnut boughs.

We found it much more difficult to leave the fête than to enter it. Around the booths and outside the church, carts and cattle seemed mixed together in inextricable confusion, and even when we had struggled through the leafy lane

and regained the main road we found it thronged by groups as anxious to get away as we were; though several of these, most quaintly picturesque in costume, seemed to have lingered too long in the cider booths. We saw men, women, and children fast asleep beside the road, with cows and sheep and pigs grazing and bleating and grunting around them—in some cases straying so far down the dusty road that we wondered whether the owners would succeed in overtaking them. We passed one man on horseback more than half asleep, who, in happy ignorance of the ridiculous figure he cut, was seated with his face to the animal's tail, nodding and swaying from side to side so violently that it was certain he and his beast would soon part company.

From St. Nicodème we drove on to Baud, and thence to Hennebont. The road is very lovely, sometimes densely wooded, and then opening on vistas of distant country which looked exquisite under first a brilliant and then a mellow sunset; but gradually the tender greens grew grey, and then it became so dark that by the time we rattled into Hennebont we could only make out that it looked a most old-fashioned interesting little town. The people of Hennebont seemed to be all in bed, and our smiling landlady gaped with surprise at our late arrival. We congratulated ourselves on having dined at Baud, for the house seemed generally asleep.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER XIV.

Hennebont—L'Orient.

HENNEBONT looked lovely in the freshness of early morning. It is charmingly placed on two wooded hills on each side of the Blavet, which is wide enough here for craft of three hundred tons. There is a port, from which most of the corn grown in the centre of Brittany is exported. The quaint old town is divided into the Vieille Ville, on the farther side of the Blavet; the Vieille Close, with its grey remains of machicolated walls peeping out here in a bold round tower, and farther on in a stretch of crenulated curtain; and the Ville Neuve, reaching up the side of the hill, so that it is a steep walk to the church of Notre Dame du Paradis.

The church stands in the midst of a large grass-grown Place surrounded by old houses, and is of sixteenth century architecture, built by the alms of pilgrims collected by a blacksmith; the portal reminded us of Honfleur, and, curiously enough, this church also is said to be the work of an English architect. There is a large porch inside the western doorway, and it was full of a kneeling congregation who could not find room inside. Afterwards, when the crowd dispersed,

we found there was nothing specially interesting within the church except some very old carving on one side of the doors.

The women's caps are very ugly here, like clumsy white hoods; but the town is full of charm. It consists chiefly of one long irregular street of old houses. Some of the eaves project from four to five feet; the fronts are carved stone, the upper story being half timbered, with carved wooden brackets. In this street is a curious old well surmounted by scroll iron-work of simple design. Over a linendraper's shop was suspended the figure of a woman painted in gay colours, and holding handkerchiefs and stuffs in her hand.

We turned up a street on the right, and passing through an old gateway flanked by two towers, evidently one of the old gates of the Ville Close, found ourselves in a yet older street than any we had seen. Round and about are many peeps of the old crenulated wall, which must have been standing when Jeanne-la-Flamme shut herself up in the castle across the water, and defied all the attempts of Charles de Blois to take the town.

It is probably the remembrance of Froissart's quaint history of the famous siege of Hennebont during the War of Succession in Brittany that makes this town specially interesting to the English tourist, although both town and castle described by the old chronicler were those on the farther side of the Blavet, the Vieille Ville.

We went along the boulevard beside the old walls of the Ville Close. The view is very pretty over the river, and the walk beside the river itself is delightful. At one part there is a fine echo; boulders show among the trees, and every now and then comes a fringe of grey trembling-leaved poplars. We came continually on bits of the old town wall, and the

falaise opposite reminded us of the Loch at Auray. We crossed the bridge leading from the quay, and stood to look back at the charming view of the town, with its white cheerful houses, its grey battlements showing here and there, and the tall spire of the church rising above all, dark green woods framing in the picture. The water in the river was an exquisite mingling of gold and grey, like the scales of a roach, and beside it was a house built on solid rock, covered with ivy and trees. Near this was the post-office.

There seemed to have been a terrible slaughter among the pine-trees which surround Hennebont. Huge heaps of logs lay about the port waiting to be shipped. The shipping and masts add yet another feature to the quaint variety offered by this very charming town.

The way up to the Vieille Ville is very steep and toilsome. Its height above the surrounding country must have given the garrison of the castle an immense advantage over the besiegers below; and it was doubtless to compensate for this advantage that the Bishop Guy de Léon, when he left the Countess, advised the construction of the huge wooden tower which Sir Walter Manny and his followers so valiantly destroyed. But the steepness of the street must surely have tried the mettle of the Countess Jeanne's horse, for, says Froissart, "She clothed herself in armour, was mounted on a war-horse, and galloped up and down the streets of the town, entreating and encouraging the inhabitants to defend themselves honourably. She ordered the ladies to cut short their kyrtels, carry stones to the ramparts, and throw them on their enemies. She had pots of quicklime brought her for that purpose."

We had been told that in the house of the Widow

Pichon, Rue de la Vieille Ville, was a most curious cellar, with a vaulted stone roof of eight arches, supported in the middle by a circular pier, and that by means of a trap-door leading from it there had once been a subterraneous communication between the castle and the Ville Close. After some trouble—for these primitive inhabitants of the Vieille Ville spoke very little French—we found out the house of Widow Pichon; first one, and then two, three, four natives undertaking to guide us to her door.

Madame Pichon came to speak to us; she could talk French. "I am very much grieved," she said, "but what can be done?"—she closed her straight lips and shrugged her shoulders—"we have been chopping wood for a week past, and it all lies over the opening to the cellar; it will take some time to remove it, even if I can get it moved, and Jean Marie is not at home; and—— but I am very sorry, madame and messieurs."

She seemed heartily sorry, and our conductresses all looked far more sympathetic than is common among Bretonnes, so we asked to be taken to the ruins of the old castle. There are only a few fragments left to mark the site of Jeanne's celebrated resistance, but the view is very fine over the town of Hennebont and the river. It was from this castle that the Countess made the famous sally which gained her the title of Jeanne-la-Flamme.

JEANNE-LA-FLAMME.

I.

What is it that climbs the mountain side?
It is, I think, a flock of black sheep.
It is not a flock of black sheep, but I do not say it is not an army,
A French army, which comes to lay siege to Hennebont.

II.

While the Duchess goes in procession round the town all the bells are pealing.

While she ambles along on her white horse, her child on her knees,

As she passes the people of Hennebont shout joyfully,

"GOD protect the son and his mother! May He confound the French!"

As the procession ended the French were heard to cry,

"Now we will take them alive in their form, the doe and her fawn; we have brought golden chains to couple them together."

Then Jeanne-la-Flamme answered from the topmost tower—

"The doe will not be taken, but as for the wicked wolf * I cannot tell. It may be that if he feels cold to-night his den will be warmed for him."

As she ended these words she ran furiously down.

She clothed herself with an iron coat, and she covered her head with a black helmet.

And she armed herself with a sharp steel sword, and she chose out three hundred soldiers.

And with a flaming torch in her hand she rode out of one corner of the town.

III.

Just then the Frenchmen were singing gaily, sitting round the table.

Making merry within their closely-shut tents, the Frenchmen sang late into the night,

When all at once a strange voice in the distance chanted these words:

"More than one who laughs to-night shall weep before daylight.

More than one who eats white bread shall bite the cold black earth.

More than one who pours red wine shall soon shed rich blood.

More than one who will soon be ashes now plays the boaster."

More than one leaned his head on the table dead drunk,

When all at once this cry of alarm sounded:

"Fire! friends! fire! fire!

Fire! fire! friends, let us fly! It is Jeanne-la-Flamme who has lighted it!"

Jeanne-la-Flamme is truly the most intrepid woman in the world!

Jeanne-la-Flamme had set fire to the four corners of the camp;

And the wind had fed the flames, and the black night was illuminated;

* This is a pun on the resemblance between the Breton word *bleiz*, wolf, and the name Blois.

And the tents were burned, and the Frenchmen roasted;
And three thousand of them were burned to ashes, and only a hundred escaped.

IV.

Next morning Jeanne-la-Flamme sat smiling at her window;
And looking out on the country and seeing the ruined camp,
And the smoke curling above the tents, now reduced to little cinder-heaps,
Jeanne-la-Flamme smiled! "What fine manure, my God!
My God! what fine manure. For one grain we sow ten will come up!
The ancients said truly, 'There is nothing like the bones of Gauls—like the bones of Gauls pounded in a mortar—to make the wheat grow.'"

This fierce outburst of Jeanne is intensely Breton, and, as Monsieur de Villemarqué, from whose "Barzaz Breiz" I have translated it, says, is far stronger than Froissart's account of the incident. Jeanne was Flemish by birth, but in this ballad she comes before us as a thorough Breton in her hatred of the French.

Mr. Tom Taylor, in his charming book, "Ballads and Songs of Brittany," gives a very spirited translation of this ballad, which he calls "Jean o' the Flame."

But after this heroic deed, which Froissart relates more circumstantially than the ballad does, the French under Lord Lewis of Spain pressed the siege so vigorously, and so battered the walls by the machines sent for from Rennes, that "the courage of those within began to falter. At that moment the Bishop of Léon held a conference with his brother, Sir Hervé de Léon," who had now gone over to the side of Blois, "and at last agreed that the Bishop should endeavour to gain over those within the town, so that it might be given up to the Lord Charles; and Sir Hervé on his side was to obtain their pardon from the Lord Charles,

and an assurance that they should keep their goods, &c., unhurt. They then separated, and the Bishop re-entered the town.

"The Countess had strong suspicions of what was going forward, and begged of the lords of Brittany, for the love of God, that they would not doubt but she should receive succours before three days were over. But the Bishop spoke so eloquently, and made use of such good arguments, that these lords were in much suspense all that night. On the morrow he continued the subject, and succeeded so far as to gain them over, or very nearly so, to his opinion; insomuch that Sir Hervé de Léon had advanced close to the town to take possession of it with their free consent, when the Countess, looking out from a window of the castle towards the sea, cried out most joyfully, 'I see the succours I have so long expected and wished for coming!' She repeated this twice, and the townspeople ran to the ramparts and to the windows of the castle, and saw a numerous fleet of great and small vessels, well trimmed, making all the sail they could towards Hennebont. They rightly imagined it must be the fleet from England, so long detained at sea by tempests and contrary winds."

The lords of Brittany took heart at this, and the Bishop indignantly left them and went to the French camp, while the Countess, in the mean time, "prepared and hung with tapestry halls and chambers to lodge handsomely the lords and barons of England whom she saw coming."

Sir Walter Manny, the leader of the English, did not lose any time, but the day after his arrival proceeded to the attack of the large machine which was placed so near the walls. He "sallied quickly out of one of the gates, taking

with him three hundred archers, who shot so well that those who guarded the machine fled; and the men-at-arms who followed the archers, falling upon them, slew the greater part, and broke down and cut in pieces this large machine. And though the French came up in great numbers, and the English," after a brave onslaught, were obliged to retreat, they did so "in good order until they came to the castle ditch. There the knights made a stand till their men were safely returned. Many brilliant actions, captures, and rescues might have been seen. . . . . The chiefs of the French army perceiving they had the worst of it . . . . . sounded a retreat, and made their men retire to the camp. As soon as they were gone the townsmen re-entered the gates, and went each to his quarters. The Countess of Montfort came down from the castle to meet them, and with a most cheerful countenance kissed Sir Walter Manny and all his companions one after the other, like a noble and valiant dame."

The besiegers lost heart, and on the morrow left Hennebont and set out for Auray, which the Lord Charles was besieging.

We tried to call up the scene as we looked down from the wooded height on to the river and the Ville Close opposite, and really the Vieille Ville is so grey and grass-grown that one might almost fancy it had been asleep since the time of its wonderful rescue by Sir Walter Manny and his archers. It was very pleasant to see with our own eyes the theatre of so many childish imaginings, for I fancy the episode of Sir Walter Manny and the heroic Countess of Montfort has always been a favourite with English children. Hennebont is certainly a place to be visited; there is a special charm about it not to be found in any other town;

but this may be said of so many towns in Brittany, that perhaps it hardly conveys the special distinction which seems to characterize Hennebont.

About a mile along the right bank of the Blavet are the ruins of the Cistercian Abbey of la Joie, founded at the end of the thirteenth century by Blanche de Champagne, wife of Duke John le Roux. She died at the castle of Hédé, but was buried at La Joie in 1283.

On the railway between Auray and Hennebont there is a station called Landevant. There is a fine view here, and once there was a fine church, but it has been most shamefully dealt with in its restoration.

It is usual to go on from Hennebont to L'Orient, but as we heard that this town was extremely uninteresting we went on by rail to Quimperlé, passing on our way through some of the loveliest country we had yet seen, and feeling ourselves at last in Lower Brittany. L'Orient is only two hundred years old, says M. Fouquet, and has therefore no attraction for the antiquary; but it appears to be a well built modern town, with long streets, a handsome suspension bridge, and a fine military port and arsenal at the mouth of the Scorff.

The two most interesting points of L'Orient to the traveller are, in the cemetery, the tomb of Brizeux, the national poet of Brittany, and, near the principal church, on the Place Bisson, a column bearing a bronze statue of Hippolyte Bisson, a young officer of the French navy, born at Gueméné-sur-Scorff, who in 1827, in the Archipelago, blew up his own vessel, with the Greek pirates who had boarded her, having first allowed the survivors of his crew to escape.

FINISTÈRE.

CHAPTER XV.

QUIMPERLÉ.

QUIMPERLÉ seemed to us, as we approached it by railway, the prettiest town in Brittany we had yet seen. As we arrived we found ourselves on a level with the top of the church, for the railway is higher even than the upper town in which is the church of St. Michel. The valley in which the rivers Elle and Isole meet lies much lower, and we looked down from a height on the old town built on the rivers which run through the narrow picturesque streets.

This old town in the valley was formerly the Ville Close, but the ancient walls of Quimperlé were all destroyed in the seventeenth century; only one old tower still exists—at the end of the Rue du Château. The houses in this street are very picturesque, with pretty gardens forming a sort of terrace beside the river Elle or Isole, for the street runs between the two rivers, and in the distance there is a view of the lovely hills which surround the town.

The Hôtel des Voyageurs is well kept, and the landlord, who is also the *chef*, is most attentive to his guests.

It would be difficult to overpraise the attractions of Quimperlé. It is perhaps the most exquisitely placed town in Brittany, and its environs are full of charming scenery.

The only historical monument possessed by Quimperlé was its abbey church of Ste. Croix, rebuilt in 1029 for a community of Benedictines by Alain Caignart, Count of Cornouaille; but while repairs were in progress in 1862 the central tower fell down and destroyed the church. It has been very well restored on its old model, but of course no longer possesses its ancient interest. It is a basilica in imitation of the church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Under the choir is a curious crypt, which remains in its original condition; it consists of a nave and two aisles, divided by short columns. Here is the tomb of St. Gurloës, Abbot of Ste. Croix, said to have been martyred here in 1057. In his hand is the crosier, and his feet rest on a dragon. The saint's Breton name is St. Urlon, and his intercession is chiefly invoked for gout, which is called "le mal de St. Urlon."

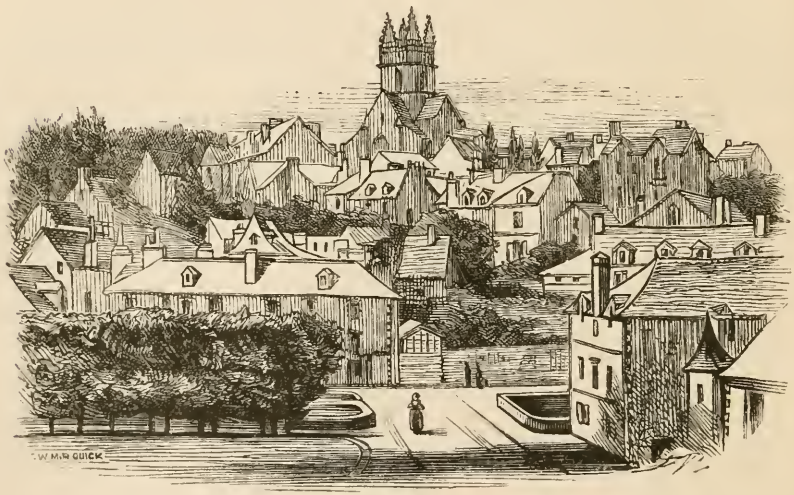
The site of the ancient abbey of Ste. Croix was in the sixth century occupied by the hermitage of Gunthiern, a Welsh king, who, after his abdication, sought shelter in Brittany, and gave himself up to a religious life, and was the founder of the original monastery. Till the Revolution the tomb of Alain Caignart was to be seen in this crypt.

The inn, Lion d'Or, was once the house of the Abbots of Ste. Croix, and had fine gardens running down to the river. The Place in front of this inn, with its quadrangle of clipped trees, is very quaint.

When the first De Montfort, the husband of Jeanne-la-Flamme, died at Hennebont, he was buried at Quimperlé, beneath the high altar of the Jacobin or Dominican convent called the Abbaye Blanche, from the colour of the robes worn by the monks. There now only remain of this

convent the door and doorway, leading into the building inhabited by Les Dames de la Retraite.

Next day, Tuesday, was market day, and we went to the market place with a friend who lives in Quimperlé. The market place is in the upper town, but peasants in wonderfully quaint costumes were to be seen about everywhere. The upper town seems pleasant and quiet, with convents and houses surrounded by delightful gardens with old grey



Quimperlé.

walls, but the way there is very steep. As we passed the church of St. Michel, on our way to the market, we stopped to look at the porch, which is remarkable. Opposite to this is a very curious old carved wooden house of the fifteenth century. But it was difficult to look at anything in the midst of the talking, laughing, picturesque crowd of market people. It was not only the costumes that were different to Morbihan, for here long hair and bragoubras were

frequent; but the people seemed so much wilder, and more excitable and noisy.

The pig-market was the most popular resort. The pigs are brought to market in carts, and as they are wanted are hauled out by their tails, struggling and screaming furiously. One old woman had a couple of pigs in leash, and she was exhorting them in Breton to keep the peace, for they were squealing loudly. A little way off we saw an old woman selling a cow; several long-haired, fierce-looking, very dirty men on their knees were inspecting the beast and feeling its different points. The old woman, in a large square plaited collar, and a cap with long lappets, stood erect, expatiating on the good qualities of the animal. At last one man, who had all this time been trying to milk it, got up, shook his head, and wiped his fingers on the cow's tail. At this the others dispersed, and the old woman shrugged her shoulders and led her cow away in a puffet.

Beyond this group we came to a row of carts filled with immense round baskets of live cocks and hens, their combs making a blaze of colour. Amid the noise and squalor and dirt, it was refreshing to come upon a dear little child in its mother's arms, with a superb skull-cap of crimson and blue ribbon embroidered with gold; and in the general market there was a great display on some of the stalls of bright-coloured gauze ribbons with broad gold and silver stripes. These, our friend said, were worn on the skull-cap underneath the net or muslin cap on fête days; and afterwards when we got farther west we saw an abundant use made of these ribbons, both as headgear and as sashes. There were stalls, too, full of black ribbon velvet of all widths, and a curious kind of binding or tape, a most

delightful combination of blue, green, and yellow. People seemed to be buying in all directions, but some of the men were so repulsively dirty that we shrank from being jostled by or against them.

All at once we came upon a gaping staring crowd surrounding a donkey-cart. In this was a porcupine in a cage. Four dressed-up monkeys were perched about the cart, and following it was a huge bear led by a chain, with a long pole in his paws. The owner, a man in a blue blouse, always made the bear bow to the audience before he began his uncouth gambols with the pole. These animals were making a progress through Brittany; for, after this, we constantly fell in with them at various towns.

The environs of Quimperlé are enchanting both for beauty and variety; excellent trout fishing is to be had; salmon, too, has been caught in the river Elle. Either for angler or artist, I cannot conceive more exquisite enjoyment than in long summer evenings or early mornings spent in wandering up and down the banks of the lovely rivers, passing by picturesque bridges and old mills on the way to the wild rocky passes higher up the valley.

One day our friend drove us to a pass called La Roche du Diable. The road going there was very lovely, and reminded us much of Devonshire. About half a mile or so before we reached the rocks we had to leave the carriage, as the road was very steep. We stopped at a cottage by the roadside, and got a little girl to guide us; and after a fatiguing climb—for the sun's heat was, as usual, intense—we reached the top of the rocks, our little guide going before and springing from one stone to another like a goat.

The view on all sides is lovely. Masses of rocks are

piled round in every direction, pine-trees springing up among them wherever they can get a footing. In front the rock goes down a precipitous depth to the river bed, and rises on the other side in rugged masses of grey precipice. Far below, between most fantastic piled-up crags, rushes the clear brown stream, breaking every now and then into foam, when the dark red and brown rocks force it to circle round them on its way down the valley. At one point a circle of very lofty rocks seems to close the water in, and here it looks like a dark lake shut in for ever; but higher up the valley its shining thread is again visible. Some way below us a little oak-tree had niched itself among the lichen-covered boulders, and stood as if perched in air. Still higher up the valley is a country house, which must command an exquisite view of the whole scene. Among this rocky, wooded country there is excellent hunting in the winter both of wolves and wild boars. One could spend days in exploring these rocks, although the descent into the valley in some parts looks impossible, it is so rugged and precipitous.

On our way back to the carriage we stopped at a low-roofed cottage and asked for milk; but, though the friend who went with us spoke in Breton, she only understood the Tréguier dialect, and it was some time before the clumsy sad-faced mistress could understand what we wanted, and then she bargained for the price of the milk before she would give it. The cottage was a most primitive abode, the earthen floor very uneven, with large stones imbedded in it. Facing the door and the one window were box-bedsteads, the woodwork perforated in the form of stars, and these filled with silvered and red paper. Below each bed-

stead stood a carved oak chest, and on one side was an enormous armoire which seemed as if it might have contained the wardrobe of the whole family. Over our heads were skins of lard and piles of pancakes, or *gauffres*. There was no sign of poverty, but squalor reigned paramount, and this was increased by the want of light; for, to avoid the tax on windows, the poorer class of Bretons usually admit light by the door: there is rarely more than one window, and this is seldom cleaned.

We went into the church of this village—a primitive little place. On our way home, just before we reached Quimperlé, we turned off on the right, and followed the course of the river some distance on the opposite banks. It is very beautiful here; on one side enormous masses of rock overhang the road, and on the other is the black swiftly-flowing river, with king-fern growing abundantly on the banks.

To the north of Quimperlé, along the lovely banks of the Elle, is the chapel of Rosgrand. There is here a good Renaissance rood-screen.

To the south the scenery is very beautiful; here is the huge forest of Carnoët, where the Dukes of Brittany once had a castle. The Bluebeard, Comorre, is said to have dwelt here, and from this castle St. Tryphena is supposed to have fled. Only a few bits of ruined wall now remain. At the edge of the forest, in a grove of lofty trees, is the old church of Lothéa, said to have been built by the Knights Templars. Mass is said in this church only once a year, on the occasion of the Pardon of Toulfouën, which takes place on Whitsun Monday. This is said to be a most picturesque scene, and is called "the Pardon of the Birds," from the number of birds sold there.

The forest of Carnoët is watered by the Laita, as the river formed by the Elle and Isole is called after their union. The ferry was called the Passage de Carnoët, and had a marvellous legend attached to it, called "The Old Oak of the Laita."

Outside Quimperlé.

At the farthest end of the forest are the ruins of the abbey of St. Maurice, built in the twelfth century by Duke Conan in honour of St. Maurice, a monk who was buried in the now ruined abbey. Over the doorway was this proud legend: "Cette maison durera jusqu'à ce que la fourmi ait bu la mer, et que la tortue ait fait le tour du monde."

The old Breton Benedictine chronicler, Dom Morice, was a native of Quimperlé; and so is the best historian of the poetry and legends of this interesting country, Monsieur de Villemarqué, author of the "Barzaz Breiz."

One can hardly say enough in praise of this most fascinating little town, and we met with so much hospitality and kindness there that we were quite sorry to leave Quimperlé, or Kemper-Elle—in allusion to the meeting of the rivers, *kemper* signifying meeting.

Very many excursions may be made from this charming little town—to Carhaix and Huelgoat by way of Gourin, also to Scaër, a wild place near the Isole, full of old customs and traditions.

At Scaër the old custom of asking a girl in marriage by means of the *bazvalan* is universal. The bazvalan is usually a tailor—a trade so despised among the Bretons, that they say, in speaking of one of the craft, "Sauf votre respect." When the bazvalan goes a-wooing, he usually carries a wand of green broom in his hand. Hence his name, as *baz* signifies "stick," and *valan*, "of broom." It is requisite that the bazvalan should be naturally eloquent and also very good-tempered. He must be able to describe elaborately the possessions and good qualities of his clients, and also he must have a ready answer to any objection that may be offered.

When he presents himself at a house he says "Good-day!" while yet on the threshold; and if he is not at once asked to come in, or if the mistress turns her back upon him and holds a pancake to the fire, it is a bad omen, and he goes away. If, as he turns away, he meets a crow or a magpie, he goes back again. But if, on his first approach,

before he has finished his greeting, the mistress cries out "Come in!"—if he sees smiling faces, then all is well; he enters and takes a seat.

He then whispers his errand to the mother, who goes outside and confers with him. She then returns and consults with her daughter, and consent is given.

The wedding takes place at the end of a month, and meanwhile everything in the house is cleaned, waxed, and polished, till the beds and presses are like looking-glasses, and the brass pans and pewter spoons glitter like gold and silver.

The bridesmaids and groomsmen are chosen, and on a Saturday evening the wedding-party goes up to the presbytery, and the young couple are betrothed. Then there is a supper, and next day the banns are published, and the bazvalan gives the invitations to the wedding in verse. Accompanied by the brother of the bride, he goes about from house to house, taking care to present himself at meal-time in the richest dwellings. He gives three taps at the door, and then says, "Prosperity and joy to this house! I am the wedding messenger."

At daybreak, on the wedding morning, the house of the bride is surrounded by a merry assemblage on horseback, who come to escort her to church. The bridegroom, with his best man, heads this procession. The bazvalan dismounts, and, placing himself on the door-step, begins the customary improvisation. This sort of song is answered by a person called the *breutaër* who acts the same part towards the bride as the bazvalan does towards the bridegroom.

The bazvalan gives his blessing to the house.

The breutaër asks what ails him.

The bazvalan says he has lost his little dove and cannot find her.

The breutaër, after some fencing, says he will go and look for her. He goes in, and returns with a little child.

Then, when the bazvalan says this is not the dove he seeks, the breutaër brings forward the girl's mother, or sometimes a widow.

At last the bridegroom is allowed to enter and seek his bride, guided by the bazvalan; she is usually found very richly dressed, and weeps at her parents' feet while a solemn blessing is pronounced over her. She and the bridegroom exchange rings, and then, after some other quaint ceremonies, the bride is placed by the breutaër behind her bridegroom on his horse, and the cavalcade moves on to the church.

In the "Barzaz Breiz," Monsieur de Villemarqué gives a specimen of this curious dialogue in the ballad called "La Demande en Mariage," and in the 23d and 24th cantos of "Les Bretons," by Brizeux, the ceremonies of betrothal and of marriage are both described.

It is specially at Scaër, in the little stream of Coatdry, that the staurotides, or cross stones, are found. Once upon a time a pagan chief threw down and destroyed the crucifix in the chapel of Coatdry, and ever since that time the Divine mark has been stamped on the pebbles in the brook of Coatdry.

There are many other places of interest to be reached from Quimperlé, especially Pont Aven and its lovely neighbourhood, and northwards the curious and sequestered churches of St. Fiacre and Ste. Barbe.

MORBIHAN.

CHAPTER XVI

Le Faouët—Sainte Barbe—Saint Fiacre.

WE started for these two churches early one morning in a very comfortable carriage with one horse, for Le Faouët is only about thirteen miles from Quimperlé, and Ste. Barbe less than two miles farther. Our driver was even more stolid than the average of Breton drivers; he seemed to think every question addressed to him an infliction, and never answered if he could help doing so.

We drove along a narrow road between the two rivers, from which we got a lovely view of Quimperlé. The country was richly wooded, and the road bordered with trees. We passed several villages, Kerlavarec and Caros-combout; soon after passing this our silent driver roused up for a moment, and pointing out a small stream which we were about to cross, said that that was the boundary between Finistère and Morbihan. It was curious to see how the trees seemed to grow stunted, and how much more dreary the country became, as we advanced into Morbihan. The woods we had grown accustomed to of late were replaced first by broad fields of red-stalked sarrazin, snowy just now with

graceful white flowers; and as we went farther on these were succeeded by the wild brown landes of Morbihan.

Just as we reached the top of a steep hill our driver pointed to the right, and we saw, rising out of a deep wooded valley, the graceful grey spire of St. Fiacre. The effect was very striking: there was no house, not a curl of smoke to be seen, only this exquisitely carved spire in the midst of trees.

Our driver informed us that it was usual to visit St. Fiacre before proceeding to Le Faouët; but we were hungry, and as he said that Le Faouët was not quite two miles off, we knew we should have plenty of time to see the church on our return.

Le Faouët is a delightfully quaint place: the stone houses with red roofs, covered with golden lichen, are built round a large open market place, surrounded by a low wall and shadowed by avenues of lofty elm-trees. The Halles, a very long curious old building, with an open timber roof, occupies a large portion of the market-place. Market was going on when we arrived, and the scene was very vivid and striking. There were no bragous or black embroidered jackets here; we saw again the white, black-bound jackets of Morbihan, and the loose linen and cloth trousers. The women wore chiefly the cloth and velvet hoods we had first seen at St. Nicholas, except that at Le Faouët the hood linings were more subdued in colour—tawny greens and yellows. The tails of the great grey cart-horses almost touched their hoofs; but there was none of the plaiting of the tails we had seen in other parts of Brittany. In the market there was a great display of the silver buttons used for the men's coats and waistcoats, and for the bodies of

gowns; the fruit was very good, abundant, and cheap, selling at an absurdly low price.

The church seemed ruinous, and had that deserted look one sees so often in these village churches, from the entire absence of chairs or benches. What would one of our comfort-loving British congregations say if they had to kneel on damp green flagstones during a whole service? There are several curious old houses in Le Faouët, and altogether it is a very primitive out-of-the-world village. It once had a castle, which was taken by King Edward III. during the War of Succession, and the town seems to have been pillaged by the brigand Fontenelle in 1695.

After breakfast we drove off to Ste. Barbe, up a pretty but steep road. We had not gone far before we discovered that our driver did not know the way, and although the chapel is not much more than a mile from Le Faouët, we lost more than an hour in seeking it. As we climbed higher and higher the steep uneven downs and roads must sorely have tried the springs of our vehicle; on reaching the highest point of the hill we saw the country spreading all around below us, but still no sign of a church, and we began to think that Ste. Barbe was, like the castle of St. John, an invisible building.

Just before we reached the open down, we passed a hut made of faggots, furze, and heather. In the opening a sabotier sat carving wooden shoes, and he must already have made a large stock of them, for the ground about the hut was strewn with large yellow chips and shavings; in front of the hut lay thick blocks of wood waiting to be made into sabots.

But our driver pointed forwards where the hill seemed to

end in a sudden shelf fringed with pine-trees. On the left was a cottage, and on the right a sort of kitchen garden surrounded by a low stone wall with tall stone supports at intervals, as if there had once been a lofty iron fencing.

Still we saw no chapel; but at the sound of wheels a wild-looking old man, with a bare red chest, came rushing out of the cottage, and our driver told us we were to alight.

The old man led us on to what seemed the edge of the hill, and then we suddenly saw before us a broad flight of mossy stone steps with stone balustrades on each side, and at the foot of this staircase, closed in by a wall of tall rocks, was the chapel, built seemingly in the air; for the shelf of rock we had seen before us is really the edge of a deep ravine, which goes down precipitously on all sides—except the projecting spur on which the chapel is built—to the brawling Elle far below. Never was a legend so graphically vouched for as this story of the chapel of Ste. Barbe, now four hundred years old.

One summer's day, in the fifteenth century, Jehan of Toulbodou, in Locmao, was hunting in the valley, and was suddenly overtaken by a terrific storm. Shut in between the lofty rocks beside the river, he saw more than one thunderbolt fall at his feet, and at last the lightning struck on the rock under which he had sheltered himself, and a detached mass seemed to be falling on him. He uttered a brief prayer to his patroness, Ste. Barbe, and a vow that if his life were spared he would build a chapel on that very spot. The rock stopped in its progress half-way down the mountain-side, where it still remains. Jehan de Toulbodou kept his vow, and soon after began to build a chapel on the rock, and dedicated it to Ste. Barbe.

At the top of the staircase on the right is a belfry, resting on pillars; but no words can describe the singular and romantic effect produced by the position of the chapel, niched on the side of the precipice and walled in on one side by steep and lofty rocks. The colour, too, is remarkable; it is built of pink granite, and time has frosted this over with silver lichen. When we reached the bottom

Ste. Barbe.

of the first flight of steps, we found a second and double staircase leading down on the left to the church, and on the right to a ledge of rock from which we had a good view of the church and the valley below. Beyond the river there is an immense range of country, partly cultivated, partly broken by dark thickly-wooded hills. The first flight of steps leads on to a sort of raised terrace supported by a

lofty archway, at the end of this terrace is the little chapel of St. Bernard, built on another spur of rock above the church.

We saw rings outside the moss-grown wall of this chapel, and were told that devout pilgrims to Ste. Barbe have attempted to creep round this little chapel, built on the sheer edge of the rock, by clinging from ring to ring. This must be a most perilous feat.

After visiting this chapel we went down the grey time-worn stone staircase on the left to the chapel or church of Ste. Barbe. On it is this inscription: "Le commencement de cette chapelle fut le 6ième jour de juillet l'an 1449." Perhaps one of the most singular parts of its construction is the place of the high altar. The door seems to open upon this, and the chapel extends lengthways right and left of it. The statue of Ste. Barbe occupies a prominent position. There are also statues of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Corentin, and of St. Ursula. There have been several others, now destroyed. Ste. Barbe also appears in a window at the end of the church, surrounded with storm-clouds and lightning. There is a vaulted stone roof, and at one of the outside angles is a graceful little *tourelle.*

But there is a damp deserted look about the building. One can fancy that mass is only said there on the occasion of the pilgrimage or Pardon of Ste. Barbe; both our guide and driver knelt down and said their prayers devoutly before the high altar. Outside, the rock-wall is so near the church that there is only a narrow path between. We were glad to emerge from this narrow passage on to a little grass platform on the side overlooking the valley, though the descent is so steep that it made one dizzy even at some little way

from the edge. The view of the whole scene from here, with the river winding through it, is very beautiful. The rose-tinted, lichen-crusted church, the frowning brown rocks all round tapestried with ivy and other clinging greenery, and then the broken massive time-stained steps, with their heavy green-grey balustrades, bits of lady-fern and ivy-leaved toad-flax nestling here and there in the chinks, making a background for red crane's-bill and yellow hawkweed blossoms, are full of exquisite colour.

A pilgrimage to Ste. Barbe must be a strange sight. As we circled round the church and found our way back to the other flight of stone steps, we wondered how a crowd could find safe footing on this little spur of precipice. Probably the pilgrims remain on the down above, and take it by turns to come to the chapel and offer their devotions. We could have stayed several hours at Ste. Barbe; and there is good fishing to be had in the Elle. Down far below we saw an angler beside the dashing, sparkling river, and Le Faouët is considered an excellent resting-place for anglers, though the best trout stream near Quimperlé lies between that town and Pont Aven. We learned that the neglected garden on the plateau above surrounds the tomb of a M. Berenger.

Going back by the direct road, we soon found ourselves at Le Faouët, and in about another half-hour at St. Fiacre. It lies at the bottom of the valley, and we had to leave our carriage at the entrance of a very muddy road; spite of so many weeks of fine dry weather this was almost impracticable. Our way lay through a farmyard, and the ruts made by heavy cart-wheels were full of water, which overflowed the road. But we soon passed this, and came to an open

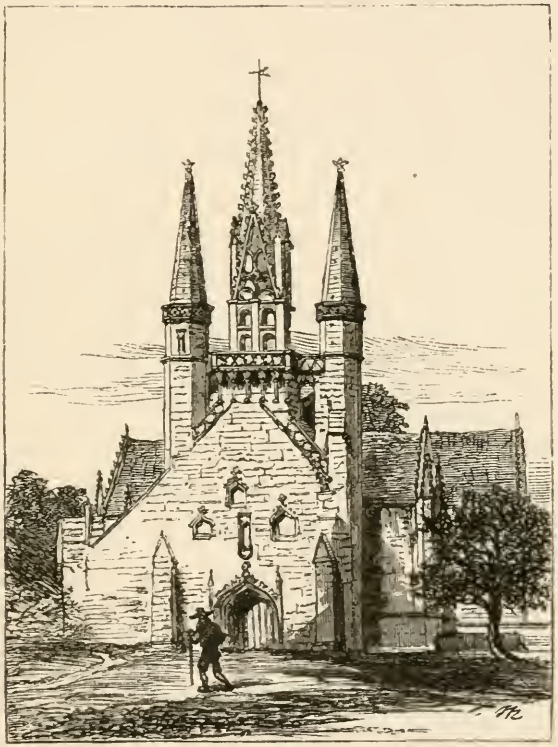
bit of ground with a few stone cottages on each side, and in its midst the beautiful Church of St. Fiacre.

St. Fiacre was built in the middle of the fifteenth century, and, though the architecture is very florid, its spire is one of the most beautiful of the Breton churches of that date. Two lesser spires are connected with the floriated gallery below the principal *flèche* by flying buttresses; the effect is both rich and graceful. The porch was once filled with statues of saints, now destroyed; only St. Christopher has escaped.

The chapel is divided into five bays by a single row of arches supported on columns. There are eight curious windows, the work of Androuet of Quimperlé, in 1552. There is some good colour in the east window: it represents the Passion and Resurrection; that in the north transept the Nativity, the Visit of St. Elizabeth, the Circumcision, the Sermon on the Mount, and St. John Baptist. The most curious window is in the side of the south transept—the legend of St. Fiacre, the patron saint of gardeners, with these inscriptions beneath the different panels: "Comment la vieille vint se plaindre et accuser Saint Fiacre à l'évêque de Meaux, disant que ça gâtait son bois."—"Comment S. Fiacre guérissait les aveugles."—"Comment la vieille tansa S. Fiacre pour l'amour qu'il abattait le bois, et le fit cesser de par Dieu, et il cessa." In one of the windows the angels wear red wigs.

The glory of St. Fiacre is its *jubé* or rood-screen. It is certainly a most wonderful piece of carved wood-work, but we were greatly disappointed to find it gaudily gilt and painted in staring colours. The door-posts of the screen represent St. Fiacre in the various acts of his life. On the

frieze to the right a wolf in a monk's frock is represented preaching, and at the foot of the pulpit is a fox coaxing chickens to come and listen to the preacher. Farther on the fox is running away pursued by the fowls, which peck at him; farther on still the fox lies dead, and the fowls are



St. Fiacre.

eating him. Above the frieze is a gallery surmounted by a Calvary, and supported by five arches with pendants formed of angels. In the niches are the figures of the Blessed Virgin and the angel Gabriel, and of Adam and Eve at the foot of the tree of good and evil.

The carving on the eastern side of the screen is quite

different. Here the pendants are boldly relieved figures, and are said to emblematize some of the seven deadly sins. The first is a disgusting representation of gluttony, and one of the others is a Breton bagpipe-player, or *sonneur*—a type of the excesses committed at the Pardons, of which he is a usual accessory. We wished we had taken our driver's advice and visited St. Fiacre in the morning, for so little light comes in through the cobwebbed painted windows, that it is difficult to examine the immense amount of minute detail on this wonderful screen when the sun's rays have grown level.

Between Guéméné and Le Faouët there is the church of Kernascléden, which is the sister of the church of St. Fiacre, only yet more beautiful. The legend relates that it was built at the same time, by Alain de Rohan, Viscount of Porhoët, in 1453, and that as tools were scarce, angels used to carry them to and fro between the workmen of the two churches. Kernascléden is wonderfully perfect. It is so completely secluded, that it escaped injury at the Revolution. It is well worth a visit, and can be reached either from Pontivy, by way of Guéméné-sur-Scorff, a long straggling town with an interesting ruined castle, or from Le Faouët—the distance between Pontivy and Kernascléden, by way of Guéméné, twenty-one miles; between Le Faouët and Kernascléden ten miles.

As we came out of St. Fiacre, we saw that the house nearest it, which we had taken at first for a cottage, was a farmhouse, with black pig-trodden straw in front and the usual amount of untidy litter, to which by this time we had grown accustomed. Perhaps the first thing that strikes the traveller in Brittany as a distinctly new feature is the

almost total absence of barns, and the constant out-of-door threshing that one sees every day in August in the finest and most available weather for out-door agriculture. We saw them threshing here as we went into church, two lads and two women laughing and striking their flails with hearty good-will and precision, though they stood so close, that it was surprising they did not strike each other's faces. On one side of the house the ground was covered with golden litter, and the fowls were, as usual, busy, clucking and scratching as they picked up the precious grains.

A severe looking Breton in the white costume of Morbihan, a buff leather belt round his waist, and a very broad-brimmed black hat, came to the house door and looked at us. We felt a great wish to see the interior of his house, and we asked if we could have some milk.

"Yes, yes," he said, in very bad French; "come in." And then over his shoulder he told a woman to ask what we wanted.

We went in and tried to explain; but she could only speak Breton, and her Breton was the most unintelligible we had met with. The master evidently considered it beneath his dignity to interpret, and he walked away to the other end of the long low room. He came back as soon as the bare-footed servant went to get the milk, and then we saw that, although his waistcoat had two massive rows of silver buttons (four dozen in number), and his coat was richly trimmed with velvet, he wore wooden sabots on his bare brown feet, with straw stuffed in at the sides. He was very much pleased when we admired his furniture, and it was certainly very handsome. There were two carved wardrobes with curious metal-work on them, and several box-beds with

carved oak chests below fixed into different parts of the wall. Evidently the whole family slept in this one room; and probably there was no other, for the sweet breath of cows came through a little arched doorway at one side.

These wooden box-beds, with their carved panels and neatly fastened bright-coloured curtains, make the inside of a Breton dwelling very picturesque, though even here, with this evidently costly furniture, the floor was of clay, trodden and uneven by the constant passage of cows, horses, and pigs, which all seemed to have free right of way, and fowls were clucking everywhere. We noticed wooden racks for spoons, like those in Yorkshire cottages.

As we went up to the huge open fireplace at the farther end of the long room, we saw a most beautiful and striking picture. Besides the usual small front window, there was in this house a larger open window looking west. This window was open, and through it the full light of the setting sun fell on the tall figure of an old woman lying outside a sort of tent-bed, and turned her faded green gown to an exquisite golden bronze.

"It is my mother," the farmer said. "She lies there always, for she is too feeble to move; but she is eighty, and she does not suffer." The old woman had a sweet old face, with very blue eyes, and she smiled at us as we went up to the bed. Nestling close against her head was a pretty little white kitten, which every now and then patted her playfully to remind her of its presence.

"Ah!" the farmer said, "it is her playfellow; my mother could not live without Mousseline."

We went back and dined at Le Faouët, and then started in the dusk for Quimperlé. Our driver had forgotten to

bring lamps, and seemed unable to borrow any. However, the landlord of the Lion d'Or, at Le Faouët, assured us that we should reach Quimperlé before dark, and that the horse certainly knew his way; but our silent driver, though it grew dark very soon, was utterly deaf to our request to drive faster. He made no answer, but went on at the most exasperating jog-trot, taking long naps; more than once he nearly rolled into the road. Finally coming to a very tree-shadowed bit of road he waked up, grew frightened, looked cautiously into the bushes on each side the way, and urged his horse on faster, muttering something about "thieves."

At last we came to a cottage, the window glowing like a live coal for some distance before we approached it. Here the driver put the reins in my hand, rolled off his seat, and knocked loudly at the cottage door. The people had seemingly gone to sleep, for he was a long time before he returned with a bit of tallow candle. He lit this, and then putting it roughly into my hand, told me to hold it under the hood of the carriage lest it should blow out, without even saying "if you please."

It was not a pleasant holding, as the grease dripped, and the candle was blown out twice before we reached Quimperlé; but if all the townsfolk had not been gone to bed our passage through the streets would have had a comic effect even in the darkness, for the wretched little candle gave a starved light that must have made it look something like a flying glow-worm.

FINISTÈRE.

CHAPTER XVII.

Pont Aven. Tregunc.
Rustéfan. Concarneau.

THE most delightful excursion to be made from Quimperlé is to Pont Aven and its neighbourhood. The drive of rather more than ten miles is very pleasant, and the descent into the valley of the Aven, in which the charming little town lies, most picturesque. On all sides except that towards the sea the hills rise steeply.

The beautiful river winds along the valley at the foot of a succession of steep hills to the sea, six miles beyond Pont Aven. The water dashes over enormous blocks of stone; the quaint granite houses of the village nestle beside it under the wooded hills. The old saying was, "Pont Aven, ville de renom: quinze moulins, quatorze maisons." Numberless mills peep out among the rocks beside the river shaded by poplar-trees. Here and there these mills are connected by little bridges stretching from rock to rock.

The effect of the bright water foaming over the grey stones; the curious primitive dwellings, of which almost all the windows are different, and the very original dress of the women, give an indescribable charm to this sequestered little place, which seems to be almost as unso-

phisticated as when Cambry visited it in 1794; when there was no doctor to be found in Pont Aven, when the inhabitants were only beginning to grow potatoes, and the millers fed their pigs on salmon-fry taken from the Aven.

The River, Pont Aven.

Now-a-days there is a very large exportation of potatoes to England, and the sending them off is a remarkable sight.

The women look as if they had walked out of the illuminations to some old chronicle; and doubtless they wore in the time of Froissart almost the same high-crowned caps flat on the forehead, with long wings pinned together behind

the head so as to form a large triangle, and the enormous finely-gauffered, square-cornered collars reaching to the shoulders, and half way down the back, with white chemisettes, called *guimpes*, in front. The women of Pont Aven are said to be some of the best dancers in Brittany.

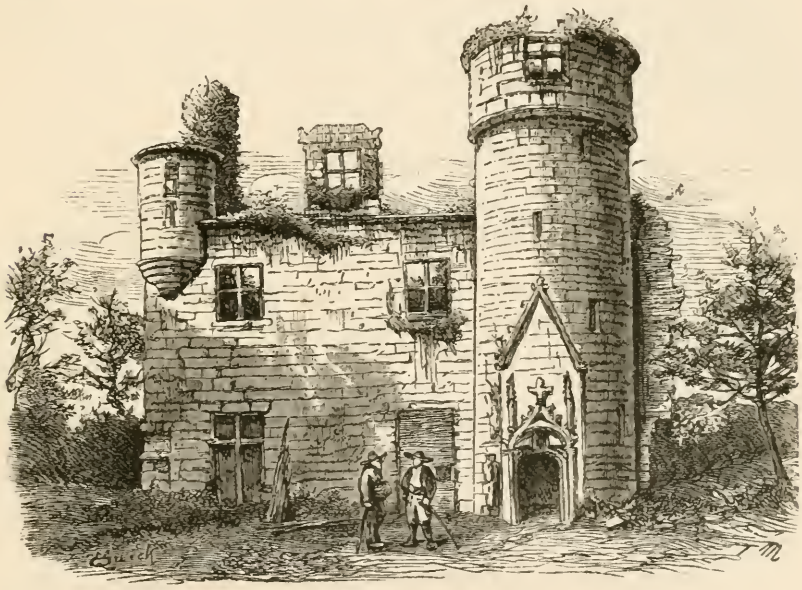
The breakfast at the Hôtel des Voyageurs was very pleasant, and the hotel itself, with its hospitable, genial landlady, Mademoiselle Julia Guillou, deserves a special mention; indeed, it is impossible to overpraise the kindness shown by Mademoiselle Julia to her guests. She is held in the highest estimation in the district. Her hotel is frequented by artists of all nations, who seem almost to monopolise it.

After breakfast we went to the farm of Kergoa to see a threshing machine worked by horses; hitherto we had only seen the flail-beating process. This horse-machine is even more picturesque. A Breton boy in a blouse and broad-leaved hat stood in the centre, whip in hand, and regulated the pace of six horses, which moved round and round in pairs. Within the circle made by the horses a pretty barefooted girl pushed the turning handle, while a man and several women were busy feeding the machine as it went round; overhead were spreading trees, and close by was a huge golden wheat-stack. Near this farm are two enormous boulders, one of them evidently Druidical; but the finest of these relics in this neighbourhood is a menhir on the road to Nevez, about a kilomètre from Pont Aven.

Early next morning we went to a very curious little chapel on the top of a hill, called Tre Malo. Every window in this chapel is of different design; the arches and pillars inside are very curious; scarcely two are alike,

and the pillars all lean different ways. There is some beautiful old glass in one window. Near the chapel we found some rare wild flowers. After breakfast we started in search of the ruins of Rustéfan.

We soon came to Nizon, a curious deserted little village about two miles or so from Pont Aven, with a remarkable and very old church; but the Calvary in the churchyard



Rustéfan

was the most curious we had yet seen, for bone-houses and Calvaries are more frequent in the north of Brittany than in the south. We saw two dolmens at Nizon, also an old ruined tower. From the village we could see the ruins of Rustéfan about half a mile off. The walk to them through a chestnut wood was delightful. This wood is like a park of the olden time.

The château is a charming, mournful little ruin, only

half its former size, the Gothic doorway very graceful, and the whole air of the place is quite in harmony with the touching ballad of poor love-lorn Geneviève, whose spirit is still said to haunt the quaint dormers of the ruined château.

It is said that the Lord of Le Faou lived at Rustéfan, and that the lady, his wife, saw that her youngest daughter, Geneviève, and her godson, the young peasant Jannik Flécher, loved one another. She therefore persuaded her husband to pay for Jannik's priestly education, and the result is told in the ballad.

GENEVIÈVE OF RUSTÉFAN.

I.

While little Jannik kept his sheep he had no thought of being a priest.

"I will be neither priest nor monk. My mind runs on young girls."

One day his mother said, "You waste your time, my son Jan.

Leave those sheep and come home; you must go to school at Quimper.

You must learn to be a priest, and you must say good-bye to the young girls."

II.

The fairest girls of the country side were the daughters of the Lord of Faou.

The fairest girls to be seen on the Place were the daughters of the Lord of Faou.

They shone beside their companions as the moon shines beside stars.

Each one rode a white palfrey when she came to the Pardon of Pont Aven;

When they came to the Pardon of Pont Aven the stones clattered as they rode.

Each dressed in a robe of green silk, with gold chains round her neck.

The fairest is the youngest, and they say she loves Jannik of Kerblez.

"I have been beloved by four clerks, and all four have become priests.

Jannik ar Flécher is the last; it breaks my heart to lose him."

III.

As Jannik went to be ordained, Geneviève sat on the threshold.

Geneviève was on the threshold embroidering; she embroidered lace with silver thread (a fitting veil for a chalice).

"Jannik ar Flécher, listen! Do not go to be ordained.

Do not take orders, for the sake of all that has been."

"I cannot go home—I should be called an apostate."

"You have then forgotten all that has come and gone between us two.

You have lost the ring which I gave you while we danced?"

"I have not lost your gold ring; GOD has taken it from me."

"Jannik ar Flécher, return, and I will give you all my fortune.

Jannik, my love, come back, and I will follow you;

I will put on sabots, and I will go with you to your work.

If you will not hear my prayer, bring me extreme unction."

"Alas! I cannot follow you. I am chained by GOD;

For the hand of GOD holds me. I must go to be ordained."

IV.

And as he came back from Quimper he passed again by the manor-house.

"Good luck to you, Lord of Rustéfan; good luck to you, great and little!

Prosperity and joy to you, little and great! Alas! I possess neither.

I am come to invite you to assist at my first mass."

"Yes; we will go to your mass, and I will be the first to make an offering thereat.

I will offer twenty crowns, and my lady, your godmother, will offer ten;

And your godmother will offer ten, to do you honour, sir priest."

V.

As I reached Penn-al-Lenn, on my way to mass,

I saw a crowd of frightened people run.

"Do tell me, then, my good old woman, is the Mass ended?"

"The Mass has begun, but he could not finish it;

He could not finish it: he had to weep over Geneviève.

Truly, he has wetted three great books with his tears.

The young girl rushed in, and flung herself at the feet of the priest:
'In the name of GOD, Jann, stop! You are the cause—the cause of my death.'"

VI.

Messir Jean Flécher is now rector, rector of the village of Nizon;
And I, who composed this ballad, I have often seen him weeping—
Often I have seen him weep on the grave of Geneviève.

Monsieur de Villemarqué says that formerly the peasants used to dance late in the evening on the grass in front of the château, but one night the dancers were terrified by the apparition, at one of the loopholes of the donjon, of an old priest with a bald head, who gazed at them with flaming eyes; and ever since the place has been shunned.

It is said, that whoever will watch within the ruins till midnight will see in the great hall a bier covered with a pall, with four large wax torches, one at each corner, and also that at full moon a young lady, dressed in green satin embroidered with gold, walks, sometimes crying, sometimes singing, on the walls. Some of our party tried the experiment, but did not see Geneviève.

The walk to the sea from Pont Aven is very beautiful. At Rostras, about three miles and a half from the town, you are ferried over to the Château de Poulguen, an extremely interesting old ruin. There is a beautiful mantelpiece in the only inhabited room.

Beyond Poulguen is the little bay of St. Nicholas, and here there is a chapel where the "pin-sticking" rite is still practised by the peasants on an image of the saint. If the pins remain in for any length of time, the happy pin-sticker is certain to marry before the end of the year. This little bay is excellent for bathing.

Another ten minutes brings you to the lighthouse of Port Manech and its magnificent and dangerous coast.

Concarneau is about eight miles west of Pont Aven. Half way between the two places is the rocking-stone of Tregunc, the second largest rocking-stone in Brittany. It lies a few yards from the road on the right, and can only be moved from one particular point. Some people say that skill and practice are required to move it at all; others assert that it is easily moved. It is a most enormous block of stone, about ten feet long and about seven in depth and height, placed pivot-wise on another stone imbedded in the ground. Not far from this rocking-stone, which is said to have been used by suspicious husbands to test the fidelity of their wives, is a sort of circular dolmen; but this part of the country teems with dolmens, menhirs, and immense shapeless masses of rock. There is a gigantic species of dolmen about a mile from the road, near the village of Ker-oter.

Concarneau is best seen from the sea. It is a most curious old walled town, completely fortified, with loopholes all round the ramparts. In these walls are still to be seen the cannon-balls fired during its siege by Du Guesclin when Concarneau was held by an English garrison for John de Montfort.

The sea, which surrounds the walls, is studded with fishing-boats, as it is the great centre of the sardine fishery. Owing to this the smell of the town is intolerable. About 1,200 boats are, during the season, continually taking these fish, which are caught in thousands. There are many vast establishments for salting and curing the fish, and also for boiling them in oil. The sardine is so delicate a fish that

the great science of taking seems to be in the expertness with which the sardines are discharged from the net without any handling. It is said that the quality of the fish is now much injured by the adulteration of the bait employed in taking them, the best bait being very high priced. It consists of the roe of fish brought from Newfoundland. Women seem to be chiefly employed in the salting and boiling houses.

Concarneau proper, or the Ville Close, is built on an island and enclosed within its walls, and at high tide these are surrounded by the sea. This walled town can be entered from the ferry at the end of the Pont Aven road by the eastern gate, or from the much larger suburb on the west, the Faubourg Ste. Croix, by the drawbridge leading to the Porte Ste. Croix. In this suburb, quite close to the sea, there is a remarkable aquarium, the tanks of which continually admit fresh sea water. These are filled with thousands of enormous crayfish, lobsters, and many edible fish, besides many specimens of rarities. The director, Monsieur Guillou, said that he could, if he liked, export, at a day's notice, from one to three thousand shellfish to various parts of France and other countries. As we looked down into the tanks, they seemed to glow with the red orange of the huge crayfish; every now and then a blue lobster-claw appeared; and the green tints of other fish were wonderfully beautiful, quite beyond the power of words to describe. Monsieur Guillou goes about from tank to tank calling his fish by dabbling in the water, and they come at once in answer to his call.

At the end of the fifteenth century Concarneau was little better than a haunt of brigands. When Duke John IV.

went to England he embarked at Concarneau. After this Du Guesclin took the town by assault, and put the garrison to the sword, except the captain, whose life he spared.

Washing-Place on the River.

A charming row of about three miles on the river from Pont Aven took us to the Château of Hénan. It is very picturesque, built on a rock almost circled by the river,

and surrounded by trees. The donjon is a lofty hexagonal tower with a very remarkable pierced parapet and a graceful tourelle, but the present owner will not allow strangers to visit the château.

Some of the washing-places on the river are very picturesque. That shown in the engraving stands at the end of a garden.

The pardon of Pont Aven is one of the best in Lower Brittany; the wrestling and dancing there have quite a reputation of their own. One of our companions stayed behind to be present at this Pardon, and I give his account:—

"We saw the place gradually fill with booths, &c., and we were told that on Sunday after high mass various shows and entertainments would begin. Accordingly the doors of the first booth were then thrown open, and a man came out on to the platform. He held his arms open, and, after telling us he was extremely modest, and that he could not speak for himself, he said,—

"'You see, I am the strongest man in the whole world, and my Christian name is Hercule. Come in, gentlemen, come in and judge for yourselves.'

"We went into the booth, and there saw Monsieur Hercule in all his glory, holding up weights and balancing them, first with one hand then with the other, and doing other herculean exploits. His confederate in white tights energetically performed on the drum as a pleasant interlude between Hercule's feats, till the doctor of Pont Aven exclaimed,—

"'If that drum goes on, I must quit the entertainment!'

"Upon this, the drummer grew sad, and, having nothing

to do, sat down pensively, only rousing to clap Hercule vigorously at the end of each performance.

"Next we went to see the wrestling. The people form a great ring. The judges, consisting of the maire and the chief of the townspeople, stand in the midst, and make a point of hiding the performance as much as possible from the lookers on. The prizes, which are chiefly flannel waistcoats, hats, and scarfs, are hung on a pole in the middle of the ring, and the intending combatants walk round flourishing them in the faces of the bystanders.

"The wrestling is wholly unlike our Cumberland wrestling. The idea is to get as firm a grip as possible on the tough canvas shirt, and so to raise the opponent from the ground. Both shoulders must touch the ground before a fall can be counted by the adversary. The action of these wrestlers is extremely fine, but the accompaniments to the scene are grotesque. Whenever there seemed to be a lull or a want of some fresh excitement, an extremely dirty and drunken Breton roared out in our ears, 'Makke lum!' which we learned signifies, 'No throw;' but as he said it whenever he had a chance, it became a little monotonous. Still it is well worth while to be at Pont Aven about the 17th of September to see this wrestling.

"The dancing is less interesting. They go on dancing all day in an exhausting rather than in a festive manner. We learned the dance and danced it, and it is more like a funeral procession than anything we ever experienced. Several lines of about ten men and women are formed, and they run and jog about to the weird discordant music of the *biniou*, a sort of dissipated bagpipes. One feature of the dance seems to be that one must never smile or appear in

any way to enjoy oneself. The best dancers, we discovered, wore a pensive and rather gloomy expression while they danced. The women looked as if they were dying, but, to judge from the sedulous way in which they pursued it, they must find this performance in some way satisfactory.

"Besides the wrestling and the dancing, there are *concours* or races of all descriptions; the most amusing is the duck hunt in the river, a favourite Breton amusement at these pardons when there is a river; the most exciting are the horse-races. Wild savage-looking men, their long hair flying in the wind, gallop frantically on bare-backed horses, and often frightful accidents occur. One poor fellow was brought in dying while we stood looking on, his horse having flung him violently."

There is a pretty little baby pardon in June at a place called St. Léger, on the river Belon, to the east of Pont Aven. The scenery here is very lovely, and in the depths of the wood is a little fountain with an image of St. Leger. Here a grand ceremony of washing babies takes place, and some strange rites are enacted. We saw about four hundred babies and children brought to the fountain.

The famous custom of the Feux de St. Jean is kept up at Pont Aven and its neighbourhood. This custom exists in many parts of Lower Brittany, and also in Léon; but there seem to be special traditions here and there attached to it. All who can afford it help in making large bonfires, and even the very poor beg a few pence to enable them to contribute something to the piles of faggots. In the evening these are lighted. The curé of the parish leads the procession, and solemnly sets light to the first pile; and, as soon as all are blazing, the *ronde* is danced round the smoking

blazing heaps to the tune of innumerable reed pipes. The dancers are chiefly the girls of the district, for she who visits nine bonfires on the eve of St. John is sure of a husband within the year. The older people sit round; here and there seats are left for those departed; and the girls, while they dance, fling letters into the flame, which they firmly believe will carry their messages to the beloved dead. The

Girl gathering Onion Heads.

scene is one of the most striking that can be witnessed in this strange country.

In the onion plots about Port Aven the tall pale purple and grey balls of blossom and seed grow about seven feet high, so that the peasant girl who gathers the onion heads looks dwarfed as she walks between the rows.

We drove at a furious pace from Pont Aven to Rosporden. This looks a quaint town, with an old fourteenth

century church, which seems to be built in the midst of a piece of water through which the river Aven passes on its way to Pont Aven. We heard that the women of Bannalec, the next station to Rosporden, are noted for their beauty. Between Concarneau and Rosporden is the château of Coëtcanton; the garden front of this château was built in 1500, by Louis le Saulx, Lord of Prat-en-Ras. The viaduct of the railway crosses the pond of Rosporden.

FINISTÈRE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

QUIMPER.

THE railway ran beside a river till we reached the Odet, on which Quimper is built. The view of the twin spires of the cathedral, appearing above the walls as one approaches from the railway station, is very imposing. We drove at once to the Hôtel de l'Épée, built beside the river Odet, which joins the Steir at Quimper; hence its name, the Breton word *kemper* signifying confluent. The view from our windows was delightful, and most refreshing to weary travellers. The tree-bordered river was just beneath us, with picturesque townspeople and peasants from neighbouring villages chatting in groups under the avenues; while on the opposite side rose a lofty wooded hill, with paths showing among the trees. This was the front view, and from a room at the back of the house we had a grand sight of the spires of the cathedral rising over a group of trees.

At the table d'hôte we seemed suddenly carried back to the Middle Ages by the costume of the attendants—five women in the picturesque dress of Pont Aven. Most of

the women were fair and colourless, and this style of face went admirably with their sombre quaintly-cut black dresses and snowy winged caps, with large white plaited collars, sleeves, and bibbed aprons. Several of them wore gilt crosses and large earrings. The first sight of these living pictures interfered with the attention due to our excellent dinner.

Going out along the quay, we soon came to shops gay with richly embroidered Breton garments: jackets worn in this part of the country, both for men and women, all worked by peasant hands; thick buff leather belts with large buckles; white collars, ruffs, and caps; large gold crosses and hearts, hanging from broad black velvet ribbon fringed with gold and covered with spangles of varied shapes and brilliant colours, so brilliant, that they reminded us of the falling stars from sky-rockets.

Quimper, anciently called Corisopitum, is, as a charming writer says, "a pleasant river-side city of fables and gables;" but at first as we walked about the town we were a little disappointed. The streets are clean and often well paved, but they looked more modern than we had expected; when, however, we turned into the quarter farthest from the quays, we passed through several streets full of old quaint houses that quite fulfilled our expectations, the cathedral spires making a fine feature from several unexpected openings. We came upon one specially picturesque view of tumble-down houses on the river at the end of a street leading from the cathedral. This must have delighted many an artist; it is charming both in composition and in low-toned colour.

On the Odet, at the end of the town, is the church of

Locmaria, part of which is very old, and said to have been built by Alain Caignart in the eleventh century, to please Odierne, his daughter, who devoted herself to a religious life in the convent of Locmaria.

We found our way up a very steep hill to the top of Mount Frugy, a public walk sheltered by avenues of trees, which looks down on the town and over the surrounding country. The view from it is very pretty, and the air seems most healthy. Indeed, for residence, Quimper is quite the most desirable town in Brittany; it is not only very pleasant and interesting, but is within easy reach of all that is best worth seeing in Lower Brittany, of which it has been the capital city ever since the submerging of the famous Is in the days of King Gradlon or Grallon, though, according to Albert le grand, Quimper, or Kemper-Odetz, had been originally the capital of Cornouaille, until King Gradlon, hunting one day, about the year 495, with all his court, in the forest of Plomodiern, not far from Chateaulin, lost his way, and towards evening stumbled upon the abode of the holy hermit Corentin, who dwelt in the forest.

The King and all his followers being very hungry, asked the saint if he could give them something to eat.

"That I can," said St. Corentin; "if you will wait a few minutes I will seek for some food."

Now there was near the dwelling of the saint a fountain tenanted by a single fish, from which the holy man took his daily meal, cutting off a little bit, which was immediately restored. He now went to the fountain and called the fish, which came quickly to his hand. St. Corentin cut a slice from its back and gave it to the King's maître d'hôtel, bidding him cook that for King Gradlon and his courtiers.

At this the maître d'hôtel began to laugh and jeer, saying that a hundred times as much would not suffice to feed the King's train; but finding that there was nothing else, he took the bit of fish, which, strange to relate, so multiplied itself that the King and his courtiers were fully satisfied.

Gradlon, astonished at this great miracle, asked to see the fish which had been thus mutilated, and going to the fountain, behold, it swam merrily in the water thereof; but some indiscreet bystander cutting a bit off it to see if the miracle would be repeated, the fish remained wounded until St. Corentin came, and having solemnly blessed it, the wound healed. He then bade it disappear, fearing some further indiscretion; the fish instantly obeyed, and King Gradlon, overcome by these marvels, prostrated himself at the feet of the hermit, which example was immediately followed by the courtiers.

He then gave St. Corentin lordship over the whole forest, also a country house which he possessed in the forest of Plomodiern. St. Corentin converted this house into a monastery, where he educated young nobles and gentlemen, among them St. Guénolé, or Wingaloc, and other saints; and when, years after, the people and lords besought the King that Cornouaille should be erected into a diocese, Gradlon consented, and chose St. Corentin as bishop; and, in order that he might have full jurisdiction, transferred his own court and the seat of government to the famous city of Is, which once stood between the Baie des Trépassés and Douarnenez. St. Corentin was so greatly beloved, that when he died the name of the city was changed from Kemper-Odetz to Kemper-Corentin.

The other and much more tragical legend tells that Quimper only became capital of Cornouaille when the city of Is perished in the waters. St. Corentin and King Gradlon were both Britons; Gradlon being brother-in-law of Conan Meriadec, whom he had accompanied to Brittany, and who had created him Count of Cornouaille. At the death of Conan's son, Solomon I., Gradlon was chosen King of Brittany, or more probably of Cornouaille. Besides St. Corentin, King Gradlon had two other counsellors—St. Ronan, who dwelt in the forest of Carnoët, near Quimperlé, and who is also the subject of miraculous legends; and later on St. Guénolé, or Wingaloc, the pupil of St. Corentin, and the first abbot of Landévennec. From Quimper westward and northward the country seems filled with traces and memories of this marvellous King Gradlon, his saintly counsellors, and his wicked daughter the beautiful Dahut.

There is little historical mention of Quimper till the time of Duchess Constance. Her third husband, Guy de Thouars, proposed in 1207 to build a castle at Quimper, but the Bishop Guillaume opposed this design as prejudicial to the episcopal authority, which ever since the time of St. Corentin had governed the city. The city, however, was enclosed with walls in the thirteenth century, the keys of which were held by the chapter of the Cathedral; but during the War of the Succession the commanders of the town asserted their superior authority and were actually the governors of Quimper. In 1344 Charles de Blois took the city by assault, and there was a terrible massacre of the inhabitants. Quimper also suffered during the wars of the League; but to its everlasting honour repulsed the

attacks of the brigand Fontenelle, chiefly by the valour of Jean Jegado, Lord of Kérolain. At the head of forty or fifty young townsmen he charged some of Fontenelle's men who had advanced into the town, and put them utterly to flight. During these wars of the League wolves had so multiplied in the country, that they actually entered the town and even attacked men and women.

We went early next morning to the Cathedral. The Place in which it stands was fast filling with market people and

Quimper. General View.

their wares. The Cathedral is a fine building, but it is more interesting and impressive as a whole, and for the way in which it groups with the old houses, than when examined in detail. It was founded in 1239 by the Bishop Rainaud; and the choir was finished about 1410 by Bishop Gatien de Monceaux. Bertrand de Rosmadec seems, however, to have built more than all his predecessors during the twenty years of his episcopate: he was buried in the chapel dedicated to him, though his tombstone is now used as the threshold of one of the entrances to the choir. The

chief part of this Cathedral is fifteenth century work of a poor kind. The spires, which are graceful and effective, are of quite recent date, and were built by the tax of a sou yearly, paid for five years by every inhabitant. This tax was called "the sou of St. Corentin;" it produced a sum of 154,427 francs. Above the western doorway are various heraldic mottoes and emblems: that of Duke John V., "Malo au riche duc," in the centre; on the left, "En l'âme," of the house of Plœuc, and that of Quélennec, "En Dieu m'attends;" on the right, that of Névét, "Perac?" (pourquoi?). Above the gable is an equestrian statue of King Gradlon, with crown and sceptre. This statue was destroyed at the Revolution, but has been restored; formerly there was a quaint ceremony connected with it.

On St. Cecilia's day a chorister, with a napkin under his arm, and in his hands a flagon of wine and a gold cup offered by the chapter of the Cathedral, mounted on the horse behind King Gradlon. He placed the napkin under the King's chin, poured wine into the cup, presented it to the Prince, and then draining it himself, he flung the golden hanap into the crowd, who struggled to catch it as it fell. But now that the custom has ceased, it is said that the cup was only a wineglass.

"Why," asks Monsieur de Villemarqué, "as the statue has been replaced, has not the quaint old ceremony been restored also?"

Formerly there was this motto under the statue:—

"Comme un pape donna l'empereur Constantin
Sa terre, aussi livra ceste à Saint Corentin
Grallon, Roy chrestien des Bretons Armoriques
Qui l'an quatre cent cinq, selon les vrais chroniques,

Rendit son âme à Dieu cent et neuf ans ançois
Que Clovis premier Roy chréstien des François.
* * * * * *
C'y estait son palais et triomphant demeure
A Landt-Tevennec gist du dit Grallon le corps,
Dieu par sa saincte grâce en soit miséricorde."

In old times, every new Bishop of Quimper, after having sworn to respect the privileges of the town, was borne to the Cathedral by the Viscount of Le Faou and by the Lords of Névét, of Plœuc, and of Guengat.

Within this church there is a very remarkable modern high altar in gilt bronze which is worth examination. At this end of the Cathedral is the curious old statue of the *bien heureux* Jean Discalcéat, a barefooted friar of Quimper in the fourteenth century, famous for his sanctity, one proof of which seems to have been that he would never kill an insect of any kind!

In the sacristry is an ancient crucifix, of which this miracle is recorded. A townsman of Quimper going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, entrusted a neighbour with a large sum of money, begging him to keep it safely till his return. The merchant went on his journey. When after several months' absence he came back and asked for his money, his friend denied, with many words and oaths, having possession of the property. The merchant cited him to appear before the magistrate, who, having heard the case, bade the friend affirm his denial before the altar. Arrived at the Cathedral, the faithless friend handed a hollow stick—in which he had placed the money—to the merchant, and then swore on the crucifix that he had restored it. As he spoke, the feet of the Christ loosened from the cross, three drops of blood fell on the altar, and the stick breaking of its own accord,

the money fell on the floor of the church, and the faithless friend's treachery was disclosed.

There is a representation of this miracle in a window in one of the chapels on the left of the nave. The singular double bend in the apse of this Cathedral has a very unpleasant effect.

When we came out into the Place, we found it closely thronged with groups of buyers and sellers, the most motley and picturesque we had hitherto seen. There were many women from Pont l'Abbé, with close-fitting skull-caps of ribbon, charming in colour, embroidered in gold and silver; the hair being brought down in a kind of unstuffed chignon over the crown, while from the forehead rises a small square white cap with peaked corners. The regular Quimper cap is much simpler than any of the others, quite square at the top of the high crown, and made of some thick white stuff, except on fête days, when it is of lace or muslin.

The prevailing features of the market in the way of costume were these opaque white high-crowned caps, a peculiar sort of white ruff with three large plaits at the back of the neck, which we had already seen at Quimperlé, and the pleasant blue-green and green-blue of the gowns and bodices, many faded to exquisite tints by the power of the sun. One woman wore a black under-body and sleeves reaching to the elbow, trimmed with three rows of yellow embroidery; below the elbow were white sleeves fastened round the wrist; the neck and square front of the body were also trimmed with yellow embroidery; over this was a greenish blue *justin* or waistcoat, which met in two quaintly-cut points in front; this was bound with broad black velvet; ruffled up round her neck and throat was a thick white

neckerchief; she had a brown cloth skirt and a grey-blue apron with large pockets coming up to the waist. The dress of many of the men from neighbouring towns and villages was also very quaint.

One side of the Place was devoted to crockeryware and sabots. The market was quite as bustling and noisy as that of Quimperle, but not so dirty. Long-haired men in enormous hats, white bragoubras, and black or brown gaiters, were on all sides arguing and gesticulating over the price of their sieves, red and brown pots and pans or pitchers—pitchers of the coarsest ware, and yet of such exquisite form that we had been longing ever since we first saw them at Vannes to bring some to England. A charming sight is one of the barefooted picturesque peasant girls, walking along with a pitcher balanced on her head. Outside the towns, the women seem often to dispense with sabots; and in Quimper, Pont Aven, and its neighbourhood, they have small well-made feet.

We went through the noisy crowd to the farthest corner of the Place, the only point from which a good near view can be got of the Cathedral; on the southern side it is built upon by the bishop's palace. A more picturesque sight it would be hard to find than these quaintly-garbed market people and their motley wares, grouped round the old grey towers, the two spires rising far above the surrounding tall houses and trees.

In the evening we went along the banks of the river; just below the *falaise* on the left the view of the Cathedral was very fine. A slight vapour hung over the church, and added an element of mystery and also of height to the lovely spires.

From here we climbed up to the terraced walk nearly at the top of the hill, and were fully rewarded for the fatigue of the climb. Below us was the whole of Quimper, some

A Street in Quimper.

of it so near that we witnessed little scenes taking place on the quay below, and we could trace the course of the river flowing on to the sea.

Later, when the moon had risen, we walked along the quay beside the basin towards the sea. Turning round after awhile we looked back at the town. The effect of the tree-shaded promenade, a long dark mass, and the Cathedral rising above, was most imposing. About here are detached houses in gardens, occupied by residents in Quimper. Some way farther on the scene was still more lovely. The moon had risen higher, the town lay in the distance, the spires of the Cathedral were mirrored in the river; on one side, in the foreground, was a forest of masts, and on the other the old suburban church of Locmaria rising above houses also reflected in the water, while beyond these were the lofty trees of the promenade, which extends for some distance out of Quimper.

Next morning was the Fête de l'Assomption, and also the fête of the city of St. Corentin. When we reached the Cathedral it was crammed. The centre of the nave was filled with people in ordinary dress, but in the aisles nearly every one wore the costume either of one or other of the neighbouring small towns and villages or of Quimper itself. The men were ranged in a long narrow line beside the pillars of the nave, the women filling up the rest of the side aisles and chapels.

The variety of caps was most bewildering: the large wings of Pont Aven and Bannalec, the little square muslin tops and skull-caps of delicious colour from Pont l'Abbé, the square sugar-bag caps of Quimper, and the pretty little close-fitting silk and satin caps of the baby-children divided melon-wise, with bands of black or blue velvet with gold-flowered embroidery between. The wearers of these little gems of colour were kept quiet by their mothers by the

occasional administration of an apple or a cake. Some of the women came to church with little white blankets under the arm to provide against rain. The women of Pont l'Abbé wore brilliant skirts. There were some of dark blue trimmed with velvet, with light blue under-skirts bordered by a broad band of yellow striped with red. These dresses had green aprons trimmed with violet, tied by broad red and yellow strings.

Such costumes as these, of fine soft cloth, are very expensive; but the pardons do not occur frequently in the same neighbourhood, and the dress is covered up and laid by in the huge *armoire*, which is a necessary part of the furnishing of a Breton dwelling, and often these fête-clothes descend from one generation to another in very good condition. The men of Pont l'Abbé were as remarkably clothed as the women—in short black or dark blue jackets, with waistcoats coming at least a foot below the jackets all round, both jacket and waistcoat trimmed with yellow lace and black fringe.

Going towards the church of Locmaria we met a procession with banners and gaily-dressed young girls carrying images of the Blessed Virgin and the saints, an old woman in a prodigious cap bringing up the rear.

In the evening the avenues on the opposite side of the river were lighted with coloured lamps hanging from the trees; these were reflected in the water, and, with the groups of gaily-dressed people in constant movement, made a vivid scene. But the fête was over early, and by eleven o'clock the streets were empty and the avenues seemingly deserted, though lights were still shining among the trees as we looked from our windows on the quay.

FINISTÈRE.

THE WEST COAST OF BRITTANY.

CHAPTER XIX.

Pont l'Abbé—Penmarc'h.

WE had proposed to go to Penmarc'h, thence along the coast to Audierne, and so on to Pointe du Raz; but we were advised to make two journeys instead of one, although by doing so we must give up the journey between Pont l'Abbé and Pont Croix, and we regretted this as there are two curious churches on the road, the Chapelle S. Viaud and the Chapelle Notre Dame de Tronoan.

For those who like boating excursions, the pleasantest way is to go from Quimper down the Odet, and then up the river on which the town is built to Pont l'Abbé. The Odet widens rapidly after passing Locmaria, and soon broadens into a sort of lake. On the right is the ruined castle of Kerdour, and after passing this the river narrows again. About ten miles below Quimper the Odet flows into the estuary of Benodet, and the boat makes a circuit before it enters the mouth of the Pont l'Abbé river between Loctudy and the island of Tudy. The church of Loctudy is very

old and interesting, built by the Knights Templars in the twelfth century; but there are some remains of a much older building, well worth seeing. There is a curious chapel in the graveyard. Loctudy takes its name from St. Tudy, who in the fifth century lived on the island, and founded a monastery there. There is a ferry from Loctudy to the island.

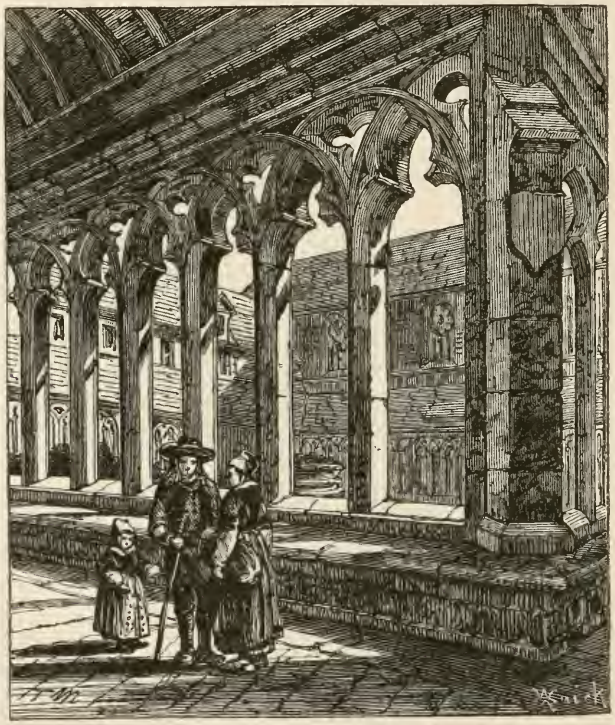
At Lesconil, about two miles from Loctudy, there is a very large group of Druidic stones. About four miles above Loctudy is Pont l'Abbé. But it is a quicker way to go by diligence to Pont l'Abbé, and then take a vehicle to Penmarc'h. The best way of all is to take a carriage at Quimper, stopping on the road and then returning from Penmarc'h to sleep at Pont l'Abbé.

The first part of the road out of Quimper was very pleasant beside the river Odet; but we soon left this, and after a few miles the cultivated smiling country changed into barren moorland, the cottages disappeared, and the only signs of cultivation were banks planted with young pine-trees.

Pont l'Abbé lay below, and seemed to be a quiet deserted place, with only one tower remaining of the castle, which in 1590 sustained a siege against the party of the League. The church, however, is both old (fourteenth century) and interesting, although it has been much mutilated, especially the fine east window. It was founded in 1383 by Hervé, Baron of Pont l'Abbé, and Perronelle de Rochefort, his wife, when they built the Carmelite convent of Pont l'Abbé. The west porch is very handsome; the cloister, which bears the arms of Bertrand de Rosmadec, Bishop of Cornouaille, is delightful; the arches are very

graceful, far better than anything in the Cathedral of Quimper, on which this prelate spent so much time and money.

Across the bridge is another church, that of Lanbour. Louis XIV. ordered the spire of this church to be demolished because the people of Lanbour refused to pay the stamp-tax levied in 1693!



Cloister: Pont l'Abbé.

The quaint little four-cornered cap worn by the women of Pont l'Abbé is called a *bigouden*. We had already seen the costume at Quimper, but it looks still more original in this old world quiet little town, where the men seem wholly occupied in the fisheries. The land is said to be so fertile that it produces with little cultivation. Both corn and

butter are abundant and of the best quality, and the fruit and vegetables are larger and finer flavoured than those of Quimper. There is a quiet quaintness about the little town which makes one think it might be a pleasant resting-place for a few days. This is said to be one of the most superstitious districts in Lower Brittany.

It is necessary to breakfast or lunch at Pont l'Abbé before going to Penmarc'h. The road soon becomes very barren and dreary. On the left we pass the castle of Kerunz, which, it is said, once communicated by a subterraneous passage with the castle of Pont l'Abbé. After this comes a dreary waste, sprinkled, after we pass Plomeur, with huge masses of granite, among which are three dolmens, and near Penmarc'h, at Kerscaven, two menhirs, one of which is fan-shaped at the top.

Penmarc'h itself looks like a place of tombs. On every side are ruins, foundations of houses; those still standing towards the east constitute the present Penmarc'h, or horse's head, as the name signifies. Another group of houses near the sea, but at some distance from the first, is called Kerity; but both of these groups, some other squalid villages, and all the rest of the ruins, once formed part or occupy the site of a large city, Treoultré Penmarc'h, which was of much commercial importance till the discovery of Newfoundland and the establishment of a cod-fishery there. The cod-fishery had been the great source of the revenues of Penmarc'h, and the decline of the trade seriously injured its prosperity; but even in 1556 it was still a considerable town, with 10,000 inhabitants. Then a sudden invasion of the sea destroyed a part of the town, choked up the harbour, and destroyed the cod-fishery; and before the inhabitants

could repair these disasters, Fontenelle, towards the end of the War of the League, came over from Douarnenez, and attacked and pillaged the town until he left it a mere wreck.

During the War of the League the inhabitants had stowed away their immense riches in the church and in the fort of Kérity, and had fortified both these places, fearing the outrages of Fontenelle. Till then most of the houses had been separately fortified, as there were no walls or defence to the town beyond the boundary of terrible rocks in the bay of Penmarc'h. Fontenelle heard of these treasures, and came in friendly guise with only a few companions to reconnoitre. While he pretended friendship, and ate and drank with the inhabitants, his people observed the positions of the church and the fort. Very soon he returned with a large number of companions. At first the peasants retired to their forts, but while they came out to listen to the propositions of Fontenelle, his people took the church, massacred its defenders, and then granted their lives to the garrison of the fort on condition of its surrender. The booty was immense. Fontenelle filled three hundred ships and boats belonging to the people of Penmarc'h with it, and returned in triumph to Douarnenez. It is said that 5,000 men suffered cruel and violent deaths, and that all the women and girls of Penmarc'h were outraged by the brigand and his followers. He left a garrison in the fort of Kérity, and held it for two years, and then Sourdiac, governor of Brest for Henry IV., reconquered it.

After this ruinous attack, Penmarc'h seems to have dwindled away till it has become the skeleton of a great city. It is now an expanse of flat rock, covered in some places with sand, in others with salt marshes; and amid

the ruins and the waste are a few squalid villages, one of which, as has been said, is still called Penmarc'h. It is a very desolate region.

There are still six churches. St. Nonna is the largest; but the ruined church of Kérity, Ste. Thumette, and the chapel of St. Guenolé are the most interesting, both at this church and St. Nonna ships are carved on the exterior of the building. Ste. Thumette was one of the companions of St. Ursula, and this church is said to have belonged to the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem. But the ruined city of Penmarc'h has not the terrible interest possessed by the Torche, or Horse-Head Rock, in the estuary of the Torche, on which so many lives have been sacrificed to the fury of the sea. The air is filled with thunder as the waves fling themselves against the rocks, jagged and terrible, but at no great height above the sea.

Cambry waited to see this coast till the moment of a violent storm. He says, "Nothing that I have seen in the course of long voyages ever gave me an idea of what the ocean is, striking on the rocks of Penmarc'h. These black separated rocks seem to reach as far as eye can see; thick clouds of mist roll rapidly across the sky, which appears to mingle with the ocean. You see only a gloomy fog and enormous flakes of foam. Suddenly these flakes rise—they leap into the air with a deafening roar—earth seems to tremble. You turn mechanically to escape; a giddiness, a terror, an inexplicable horror, overwhelm you; the leaping waves threaten to swallow all before them; you are only reassured when they fall on the shore and die away at your feet."

But the cross on the Torche of Penmarc'h is a warning

against the treachery of this tremendous ocean, even when there is no storm to excite its fury. This rock is separated from land by a passage called Le Saut du Moine, because St. Viaud sprang from the rock on to firm land when he landed from Ireland. It is said to be the entrance of the sea into this passage which causes the noise heard sometimes even a few miles from Quimper. The cross was erected to commemorate a sad event which took place here a few years ago. A lady and her children were sitting on the rock, quite unconscious of the rapid advance of the tide. Suddenly the husband, who had remained on land, called to them to return, but it was too late. A huge wave broke over the rock, and swept away his wife and children before the unhappy man's eyes.

The range of rocks reaches from the channel in which the Torche stands to the point of Penmarc'h. It is impossible to imagine anything more forlorn and desolate than the whole aspect of Penmarc'h. It seems as if a city had tried to exist here and had given up in sheer despair, for it does not appear that the ruined Penmarc'h dates beyond the fourteenth century. The savage thunder of the storm against the Torche must have been enough to deafen the inhabitants.

It is about a twenty-miles drive from Pont l'Abbé to Pont Croix; but we were advised to go to Audierne from Quimper, by way of Landudec and Plozevet, returning to Quimper by Pont Croix; however, as we wished to end our journey at Douarnenez and we heard that the Plozevet road was a bad one, we took our places in the Audierne diligence, which leaves Quimper, or rather which is said to leave Quimper, at half-past two o'clock.

FINISTÈRE.

THE WEST COAST OF BRITTANY.

CHAPTER XX.

Audierne—Pointe du Raz—Pont Croix.

WAITING on the Cathedral Place, we found a very small vehicle, into which came two tall Sisters, dressed in enormous white flannel gowns, a girl, and a stout, very talkative French gentleman, who told us he expected to get quite a new sensation from the contemplation of the ocean at Audierne.

The road mounted considerably on leaving Quimper. Between the city and Plonéis is the Château of Prat-en-Ras, rebuilt at the end of the eighteenth century, but which was an ancient appanage of the descendants of the Wild Boar of Ardennes. The lord of this château levied a tribute of one egg each Easter on every household on his domain. At Guengat, about two miles off the road, is a curious and ancient church. There was also a strong castle of Guengat, of which only a few ruins remain. The name of the lords of Guengat occurs frequently in Breton history.

About thirteen miles from Quimper the road divides into three; those on the right lead, one to Douarnenez, and the

other to Ploaré. We had for some time seen the graceful spire of this church high above the road on the right. On the left is the road to Audierne beneath a steep ridge of hills. Just here is a sort of estuary or river, called Poul David, or, as it was once called, Poul Dahut. Tradition says that this is the spot where King Gradlon's daughter, the wicked Princess Dahut, was swallowed up by the waves, which at once retreated towards the sea. The river is so wide, that looking on towards Douarnenez we saw the masts of large vessels lying at anchor.

We walked on along the road on the left towards Audierne, while the diligence went on to Douarnenez with the passengers. As we looked back the beautiful spire of Ploaré was very prominent; it is visible for miles. We passed the village of Poul David, and the diligence overtook us just as we came to a wild stretch of country, chiefly landes, sometimes bare, sometimes covered with furze and heather, with every now and then a single fir-tree.

About six miles from this we passed through Confort, and then through Pont Croix. If we had not determined to drive back from Audierne to Douarnenez we should much have regretted being in the diligence, for both these churches looked interesting, especially that of Pont Croix.

A little while before we reached Audierne, through a fringe of tall pine-trees on the right, which borders the rocky road, we got a most exquisite view of the blue river. This was certainly the loveliest bit of scenery we saw in Brittany, first on the right, then on the left of the road. Clouds of light moving vapour obscured the tops of the hills, which are here sometimes wooded, sometimes of rich dark brown rock; and as the road followed the curves

of the river the scene seemed to change every moment, the light ever-moving vapours giving a most poetic aspect to the view.

The river widened as we drew nearer to Audierne, but the hills, first on one side and then on the other, advance so boldly, that it was not till we reached Audierne, at nearly seven o'clock, that we saw the sea glimmering beyond. As the town is built beside the river, it is necessary to go to the end of the harbour to get a full view of the broad dangerous bay, extending from Penmarc'h on the south to the Pointe du Raz on the north. On a rock near the harbour two crows are said to be often seen—the embodied spirits of King Gradlon and his daughter Dahut. The modern pier and sea-wall have doubtless taken from the wildness of the scene; but still this savage bay is one of the most weird spots in Brittany—so utterly lonely and deserted, so full of terrible memories and legendary tales.

After dinner we went down to the pier. It is built on a mass of stone or rock, once called the Cammer, and said to be the southern end of those foundations of the city of Is which reach beyond the Pointe du Raz. Farther south is the bank of pebbles at Plovan, famous some years ago as the scene of shipwrecks; for this terrible bay is strown with hidden rocks, which cause destruction to any ship that ventures too near its frightful coast.

Cambry tells us that so late as the beginning of the century frightful scenes of wrecking took place at Plovan. The inhabitants of this village, having beaten back the soldiers sent to protect a wrecked vessel, flew on it, plundered it of everything, and then, having drunk all the liquor they could find, broke open and swallowed the

contents of a medicine chest, which gave death to some of them, and to others frightful convulsions.

In earlier days than this, murder was frequently committed by these wreckers, who seem to have plied their trade all round this western coast, frequently tempting distant ships to destruction by means of lanterns fastened to the horns of cows tethered on the rocks. Now the people seem fairly civilised.

The sea-view is very grand and wild, with every now and then a glimpse of one of the many lights beyond the long sea-wall on the north, while the sea rolls up in a subdued roar against the rocks; but as we turned from the fresh keen air brought by the moaning waves, the smell of Audierne was most unsavoury.

A hill on which the church is built rises at the back of the little town, so that there is no escape from the exhalations of the mud at the mouth of the river. Near the inn we met our communicative fellow-traveller. He was in ecstasies, and talked grandiloquently of the magnificence of the ocean and the sensations it inspired in him. He then went on to tell us he had brought a new suit of blue cloth to wear next day, and asked us gravely if we did not think that blue would harmonise with the colour of the Atlantic. We complained of the smell near the inn, but he said he did not perceive it, and that he should spend a fortnight at Audierne.

Next morning was very bright and beautiful. As it was a festival the town was in holiday costume. The steep way to the church was full of old men and women toiling slowly upwards, and at eight o'clock the building was full of people, and gay with flowers and banners and picturesque

dresses and caps. After service we walked down to the jetty. The bay looked beautiful in the fresh morning light, the sea the most intense blue under the cloudless sky. Audierne was once a town of some importance. It had a large cod-fishery, and was the chief port for exportation to Spain of dried fish, &c. The houses are built of granite, and many of them are large and comfortable looking, scarcely in keeping with the look of the townspeople. We saw old dates on more than one of these houses.

Directly after an excellent breakfast at the little Hôtel des Voyageurs, we started for Pointe du Raz in a vehicle which we had bespoken the day before at Quimper. It is nearly a two-hours' drive, through a barren and most desolate country. Very soon we saw the sea on the right as well as on the left, and every now and then little villages clustering round tall slender campanile-shaped church towers, for in this part of Brittany the spires rest on a series of open square galleries placed one above another. On the left was St. Tugean. There are curious ceremonies observed at the Pardon of this village.

Farther on our driver pointed out on the left the chapel of Notre Dame de Bon Voyage, where he said a Pardon was held from the 20th to the 25th of August. It looked so desolate and forlorn on the bare stony waste backed by the great glittering sea, that we wondered how it could attract a large gathering at such a distance from any large town; but our driver assured us that the Pardon of Notre Dame de Bon Voyage was in great repute among the sailors and fishermen of this storm-beaten coast.

The wind blew with such fresh violence that we should have realised, even if we had not seen, that the ground on

which we travelled was rapidly narrowing into a mere tongue of land, with the sea on each side. On the right we saw Plogoff, with its church dedicated to St. Ké, or Collédoc, the saintly guide of Queen Guenevere in her repentance after the passing of King Arthur. There is a chapel on the left dedicated also to St. Collédoc. On the right is another little village, and then we begin to see the blue Baie des Trépassés.

The country grows more and more desolate. Every now and then we come to a group of wretched-looking hovels, surrounded on all sides with stone fences. These fences seem to divide the barren tract into squares, not so much for protection against straying cattle (for there rarely seems any crop within the enclosure) as for a barrier against the fury of the wind and even of the sea, for the road has dwindled here into a very narrow strip of land. We cross a bridge, which our driver says no Breton living near the Raz would pass over at night. We ask why, and he says with a very sceptical smile, "Because of the departed souls in the Baie des Trépassés."

But now on the left is the broad Bay of Audierne; in front the Île Tévennec, with its lighthouse; and on the right is the exquisite blue of the Baie des Trêpassés, beyond it the little church of Lescoff. Heaps of brown and tawny orange seaweed are drying in the sun—the *goëmon*, from which, our driver said, "the chemists extract an acid, which the physicians sell very dear." Growing among the heaps is an abundance of large blue-leaved sulphur-blossomed poppies. The gathering of this sea-weed, "La pêche de goëmon," is a fine sight to witness in the autumn. When the sea is wild with September storms, men standing

in a row along the shore fling into the boisterous foaming waves long lassoes, to the end of each of which is fixed an iron trident, and by help of these the harvest of sea-weed is dragged beyond the reach of the waves. These splendid brown and orange masses form a feature of the Breton sea-coast as they lie through the summer drying in the sun. The seaweed makes winter fuel and forage for cattle, besides its medicinal properties.

The carriage road ended on a sort of green plateau, on which the lighthouse stands. We were told that it would be possible to lodge at the lighthouse; and certainly the Pointe du Raz, the Land's End of France, is worth the careful study of a painter.

We left our carriage here, our driver having put us in charge of a guide; and it is much safer to have one. It is not an easy or a very safe journey to the Pointe alone. As we went down the ground grew more and more rugged, till we found ourselves on the side of the precipitous savage-looking rock itself.

It is a magnificent scene—the jagged precipice of fantastic and many-shaped rocks, and the foaming water roaring as it dashes into the caverns below. The colour of the rock is marvellous—a rich and varied brown, frosted with hoary lichens—while in every chink where it can nestle are silvery tufts of sea-pink, and in rich masses here and there large bright green fronds of *Asplenium marinum*. The scene was full of exquisite colour, but rather wild and savage than grand, as the rocks are not much more than 230 feet above the sea; still it must be full of terrible grandeur in a storm. Our guide told us that indeed "it was very awful to be here in rough weather; we could not be here," he

said, "the wind would tear us away." Even now, when the sea was perfectly calm elsewhere, it raged and roared as it forced a way between the lofty channelled and many-shaped rocks, and flung showers of snowy foam up high against the brown walls, at the foot of which were pools of the most intense emerald. The rocks seem as if they had been twisted and torn into the strangest forms, and the water rushes among them with a noise and fury that become

awful as one looks down between their black sides to the Trou de l'Enfer, a bubbling seething cauldron, which seems a fit haunt for demons.

We began to mount after this, and looked down on it again from the height above. I was not allowed to go much beyond the Trou de l'Enfer, for as we advanced near the Pointe itself the wind grew more and more violent and the footing more slippery. So I stayed among the lichen-

covered rocks while my companions went round the extreme end.

The scene was as savagely wild as could be dreamed of—rock and rocky islets everywhere; in front a few miles away is the Ile de Sein, the Sena of the ancients, the abode and death scene of the Druidess Uheldeda and her sister priestesses. This was the birth-place of Merlin, and here he is said to have carried King Arthur to heal his wounds. Just now the island was veiled in mist; but there seemed to be between it and the Raz a continuous chain of rocks, some above some beneath the water. There was not a boat to be seen. Every now and then a black cormorant, looking a mere speck in the vastness, swam across the void with a hoarse jarring cry.

No wonder the Breton fisherman utters the prayer, "Save me, O Lord, in the passage of the Raz, for my boat is little and the sea is great."

There are fearful legends on this coast of ships lured in former times into the Bec, or Passage of the Raz, as the strait between the Pointe and the Île de Sein is called, by false lights; for the wrecking on this coast seems to have been as terrible as in our own Cornwall. The quiet fishermen of the Île de Sein must have had murderous forefathers. A vicomte de Léon said of the Pointe du Raz that he had in his territory the most precious stone in the universe, for it brought him in every year a thousand sous: he spoke of the *droit de bris* on the continual shipwrecks. Shipwrecks still take place here constantly, spite of the numerous lights along the coast.

No wonder the Baie des Trépassés has such a mournful, desolate aspect, for, besides the shipwrecked bodies which

have been washed ashore by the blue waters, it is here that departed spirits await the boat which is to bear them to the Île de Sein. The lost souls of the lovers of Dahut also wander here, and in the night the fisherman hears them crying and wailing piteously. Between this bay of the departed and the Bay of Douarnenez have been found beneath the water huge stones and other records of the foundations of a mighty city, the city of Is, which was so unrivalled in its day for luxury and magnificence, that Paris, or Par-Is, is said to take its name from its supposed equality with this ancient city, drowned by the mad folly of a wanton woman.

The city of Is, or Ker-Is, appears to have been given up to vice and most inordinate luxury. It was built on level ground beside the sea, and protected from its fury by a dyke with a pair of water-gates, of which King Gradlon kept the key. More than once St. Guénolé, the holy successor of St. Corentin, had solemnly warned the King against the luxury and riot of Is, and especially against the profligate life of Gradlon's only daughter, the Princess Ahés or Dahut. But King Gradlon loved his child so dotingly, that, although he deplored her vices, he had no power to restrain her. She dwelt in a high tower, and as soon as she was tired of her lovers they were flung into a well at its foot. At length one night a favoured lover asked her for the key of the sluice-gates; and to please him Dahut stole softly into her father's chamber and took the silver key from the neck of the sleeping king. It is supposed that the lover opened the sluice-gate by mistake, or that Dahut opened them in mere idleness of folly.

Suddenly, in the dead of the night, Gradlon heard a voice

bidding him arise and flee, for the waters were overspreading the city. He listened and heard the rush of the flood, and he mounted his horse and prepared to escape; but he heard also the voice of his beloved daughter calling on him to save her, and he paused to take her up behind him. Away they fled, the angry roar of the waters in rapid pursuit. Already the flood was gaining on them, the horse was knee-deep in the angry waves, when the cry sounded in Gradlon's ears, "Cast away the demon from behind thee, Gradlon!"

Dahut's hold relaxed, and she sank in the roaring water. As she sank the waves retreated, and since that time the tide has never come farther inland than the estuary in the village of Poul David, or Poul Dahut, where she disappeared. It is said that Dahut still haunts the scene of her crimes, and that at night the trip trip of King Gradlon's horse-hoofs is still heard beneath the hillside.

The following is a translation of the ballad given by Villemarqué:—

THE DROWNING OF KER-IS.

I.

Hast heard, hast heard, what the man of God has said to King Gradlon at Is?—

"Give no place to love; give no place to folly. After pleasure comes grief!

He who eats the flesh of fish shall be eaten by fish; and he who swallows shall be swallowed up.

He who drinks and mingles wines shall drink water like a fish; who knows not this shall learn it."

II.

King Gradlon spoke:—

"Good companions, I must go to rest."

"You shall sleep to-morrow morning; stay with us to-night. Nevertheless, let it be as you will."

At this the lover whispered softly, ever so softly, these words in the ear of the King's daughter:

"Sweet Dahut, the key."

"The key shall be stolen, the well shall be opened; all shall be done as you desire."

III.

Now whosoever had looked on the sleeping King would have been full of admiration,

Of admiration, gazing at him in his purple robes, his silver-white hair flowing over his shoulders, and his gold chain round his neck.

Had one been watching, he would have seen the fair young girl enter the chamber softly on her bare white feet.

She approached the King her father, she knelt down, and she carried off chain and silver key.

IV.

The King sleeps on; he sleeps. But a cry rises from without, "The water is let loose—the town is drowned.

Lord King, awake! To horse, and away! The furious sea has broken bounds."

Cursed be the fair young girl who opened after the fea st the sluice gate of the city of Is, that barrier of the sea!

V.

'Woodman, woodman! tell me, has the wild horse of Gradlon passed through the valley?"

"I have not seen the horse of Gradlon pass this way, but in the darkness I heard trip trep, trip trep, trip trep, fly as fast as fire."

"Fisherman, hast seen the daughter of ocean combing her golden hair in the sunshine beside the waves?"

"I have seen the white daughter of ocean; I have even heard her sing; her songs were sad as the moan of the waves."

Looking round us beside the lighthouse, it is difficult to realise that any cultivation has ever existed. The curse of the Cities of the Plain seemed to be burned into the stone-strown, rock-bound coast. Even the very children who

stray out from the cottages to beg for sous are stunted and squalid, quite unlike dwellers in the fresh invigorating air that one breathes on the Raz.

From the Pointe our guide showed first the Pointe de Van, which makes the farthest extremity of the Baie des Trépassés; next the Cap de la Chèvre; then the Pointe Toulinguet, which he said was the last cape before the opening to the *goulet* of Brest. We asked for the Pointe St. Mathieu, but he said that was not to be seen.

"The view," says Cambry, "from the Pointe du Raz is sublime, especially at sunset. The Isle of Sein, the line of rocks which defends it, and which is finally lost in the horizon more than seven leagues away, the lofty Pointe de la Chèvre, of a dazzling whiteness, the coast of Brest near Le Conquet, Ushant, the Bay of Audierne, the Point of Penmarc'h, and the immense ocean ruffled by the evening breeze, form a stupendous whole, which unites itself with heaven, with the universe, with eternity.

"It is in this corner of the earth, celebrated by the neighbourhood of the Gallic priestesses of the Isle of Sein—by the residence of the old Druids—by the ideas of destruction, of death, of the shades of which we still find traces—it is here, I say, that the imagination of the ancients placed the mouths of hell, the gulfs of Tenaro, which have been erroneously transported to Italy, a country which the ignorance of the Greeks has confounded twenty times with the West of Europe.

"This is the real home of the sombre sagas of the most ancient writers. It is not in Iceland, nor in Thulé, nor in England—unknown even to the Gauls—nor in Ireland, that the theatre of these wonderful legends must be sought."

Cambry also says that it is here that the fable should be placed respecting the passage of departed souls to Thulé. "For sailors of our coasts, especially Pierre le Breton of L'Orient, attest that from time out of mind the Isle of Ushant went by the name of Thulé, and is so called still in legends and songs."

Doubtless the Isle of Sein was once a prolongation of the rocks of the Pointe du Raz. It was the Sena of the Romans, and the Enez Sigun of the Bretons. It is only a rock; there is no tree, not a trace of the sacred groves of Uheldeda. It is scarcely two miles long and not half so wide. It has about six hundred inhabitants, gentle hospitable fishermen, very unlike the wreckers of old times.

We went reluctantly back to the lighthouse, and found that it was necessary to drive back some little distance before we could reach the shore of the Baie des Trépassés, —a desert of yellow sand washed by the blue water; beside it is a dismal lake or swamp, filled with flags and bulrushes, called "l'étang de Laoual." This is an awful place, even in bright summer-time; it is here that the shapes assemble to wait for the boatmen who pilot them to the Isle of Sein. It is possible to walk on to the Pointe de Van, which must command a view of the Bay of Douarnenez; and our guide said that at Troquer, a little farther on, were to be seen large stones, supposed to have belonged to a great city, and the peasants call it Moguern Guer-a-Is—the wall of the city of Is. There is also there the end of the Roman road which can be traced to Carhaix. There was a chapel beside Laoual, where it is said a phantom priest is always waiting to say a mass. This old legend

shows the pomp that hangs about the memory of the place—

> "Sept monteaux d'ecarlate, et soixante,
> Sans nommer les autres,
> Venaient de la ville d'Is
> A la messe à Laoual."

Our driver had found out that we liked stories, and as we drove back to Audierne, sitting sideways on the driving-seat, he kept on pointing out little fishing villages on the right of the road, telling us of wonderful rescues from shipwreck effected by the dwellers on this jagged and terrible coast. He told us that all the children learned to swim as naturally as ordinary children learn to walk, and he said that in one village there was living a woman named Jeanne, a mother of ten children, and that she had already received two medals. She had saved eleven lives, alone and unaided, by swimming out boldly with a rope to two ships which at different times had struck on the rock.

"She is a tall fine woman," he said; "she does not know fear, and she swims like a fish. But then all our girls and boys do that; we throw them in the water when they are two years old."

We asked what Jeanne's husband was like. He half shut his eyes and smiled. "Ah, that is different. He is little, and he is a tailor by trade."

"He does not swim out to save lives then?'

"No, he would be afraid; every one is not like Jeanne."

Poor tailor! But it was pleasant to hear that Jeanne's was a happy household, and that her sons were tall strong young men, good swimmers like their mother.

We drove back rapidly to Pont Croix, as we heard there

was a Pardon there. Our driver said that his little daughter of four years old was to be in the procession. Just as we drew near Pont Croix we heard the church bells ringing, and in another moment we saw the procession coming up the road. A long avenue leads from the road to the fine old church, and we stood at the corner of this while the procession passed on.

First came a number of little girls dressed in white, with most elaborately worked caps. Next a body of wild-looking men with long hair; then came a band of young girls dressed in white muslin, with coloured ribbon sashes and the charming lace caps of Pont Croix, which have long fluted crowns something like those of Belle-Isle. Groups of four of these maidens bore gaily-dressed images of the Virgin, of St. Anne, and other saints, and each maiden held by the hand a little fairy of a child, also dressed in white, with flowing hair crowned by a wreath of white flowers. Our driver pointed out a beautiful little dark-eyed creature, with long brown hair, and said she was his child. This part of the procession looked like a lovely group of spring flowers.

Next came a crowd of priests and choristers singing lustily, and after them a large number of earnest-faced, wild-looking men, bearing banners and crosses. All the men wore richly embroidered jackets and gaiters, and enormous blue and sometimes brown plaited bragoubras, made of fine cloth.

After a great number of them had passed, the women followed, mingled with more men. These women looked like a flower-garden. Some of the dresses were very rich and full of colour; many of them trimmed with gold embroidery, with gold and silver and scarlet and blue ribbons bound

round the head and showing through the fine lace caps of most varied shapes. Many, too, of the younger ones wore lace ruffs and collars, gorgeous gold and silver gauze ribbons as sashes, and showy spangled velvet with gold hearts and crosses on their necks. There must have been more than a thousand persons walking in procession, all in solemn silence, except where they joined in the monotonous chant intoned by the priests.

There were few bystanders, but they looked very reverent. We took another way to the church—one of the finest of its date in Brittany—and when we reached the great western doorway the sight was most impressive and picturesque. Both aisles and the nave were crammed with kneeling men, women, and children, except a narrow lane in the centre. We slipped round and got in at a side door, and saw the procession pass up to the high altar—a blaze of lights and decoration.

As the procession came streaming up the church, the contrast between the flower-like beauty of the girls and children in their floating white dresses, and the dark earnest faces of the men, doubled in sternness by the intense expression that pervaded them, was perhaps the most striking sight we had met with, and the grandeur of the church increased the effect of the whole scene.

We could not examine the building as carefully as we wished owing to the almost suffocating crowd that thronged it, but the interior looked very interesting, though disfigured by whitewash. The nave is old, eleventh or twelfth century; and there seems to be some beautiful stained glass at the east end. The choir arches of the chancel are Pointed, but the pillars are Romanesque, and

some of the other arches are Moorish in shape. The spire is very lofty and beautiful, about 220 feet high, and the great south portal is most remarkable. There are five carved roses in the gable of this.

In the fourteenth century, Alice, Lady of Pont Croix, married John of Rosmadec, chamberlain of Duke John IV. Their grandchild was John of Rosmadec, half-brother of Bishop Bertrand Rosmadec; and it is thought that this John built the spire, the arches of the choir, the windows of the apse, transepts, and side chapels of the Collégiale, as it was called, of Pont Croix; the monastic buildings connected with it have been destroyed, and it is now the parish church of the little town of Pont Croix, Notre Dame de Roscuden. Under the altar of the Lady Chapel is a wonderfully carved Last Supper.

In 1597, when Fontenelle attacked this town, the church became the citadel, and finally the inhabitants, with their captain, Ville Rouet, were driven to take refuge in the tower. For some time Fontenelle found it impossible to dislodge them; for as the assailants could only mount the stairs leading to the platform one by one, they were cut down as they appeared. Fontenelle then tried to stifle them by burning green broom on the staircase. At last he promised their lives to the besieged, and they surrendered. He then hanged all the men, and, reserving the captain till the last, he caused his wife to be outraged before his eyes, and then hung him also.

The heat was so intense, and we had been for so many hours in the sun, that we went into the inn to rest. It was thronged with visitors to the Pardon, and their vehicles seemed to be in all directions. There were plenty of

announcements in the town of Pont Croix of "Ici on loge à pied et à cheval;" but this seemed to be the chief inn, and, from the general look of it, we congratulated ourselves that we had not arranged to stay there.

Our driver came after some delay and announced to us that he wished to spend the rest of the day at home, and had therefore engaged a fresh horse and carriage and another driver to take us on to Douarnenez, and home in the evening, if we wished, to Quimper. We did not benefit in any way by the exchange. The fresh horse would not go, and our new coachman knew nothing, and had an inveterate habit of gossipping on the road; and as this was the anniversary of several other Pardons in the neighbourhood, we continually met carts full of peasants in rich and beautiful dresses, often with pretty girls, and our driver, who was evidently a favourite, was for ever jumping down to have a chat with some of his friends, leaving our horse to crawl along at a snail's pace. We began to fear it would grow dusk before we got to Douarnenez. At last my companion whipped up the horse during one of these absences, and we went on at a quick pace, leaving our chattering driver to overtake us as he best could; and when he finally reached us, puffing and panting and very red in the face, he seemed effectually cured of his love of gossip.

We stopped a few moments at Confort to examine the handsome modern Calvary and the pretty little church. Inside this, fastened to the roof, is a curious old sacring wheel with a peal of bells. We much wished to hear these, but could not find the sacristan; the whole village was seemingly deserted; every one had gone to the Pardon at Pont Croix.

The road between Confort and Poul David looked even more charming than we had thought it the first time, and as we turned off to Douarnenez and followed the course of the river the tall spire of Ploaré seemed to follow us as it had done on our way to Audierne, while glimpses of the bay before us were exquisite.

FINISTÈRE.

THE WEST COAST OF BRITTANY.

CHAPTER XXI.

Douarnenez.
Locronan.
Crozon.
Chateaulin.
Rumengol.
Daoulas.

WE had been told so much that was unfavourable about Douarnenez that our first impressions were full of delightful surprise. A longer acquaintance with the little town teaches one that it is very ill kept and is full of unsavoury smells. But whoever sees the Bay of Douarnenez for the first time, either at early morning or at sunset, will never forget its exquisite loveliness. It may be that its beauty is enhanced when one comes to it fresh from the savage dreariness of Penmarc'h and the tormented sea and bare fantastic rocks of the Raz; but the lovely blue island-gemmed bay, reaching from the Pointe de la Chèvre to the Pointe de Van, now bordered by dark jagged rocks, now curving into numerous tiny bays, where valleys that lie sunk between stretches of moorland end in nooks of silver sand, sometimes almost fringed by trees and clinging plants that clothe the very cliffs, is a picture that can never be forgotten.

To the seeker after loveliness in nature Douarnenez offers a constant and varied charm. It is far more beautiful than Sidmouth, and has besides the two great charms of variety and picturesqueness.

In a charming paper in the *Cornhill Magazine* the writer says: "Round all the eastern and northern shores of the bay the view is bounded by long ranges of noble outline; first the hill of St. Ronan, where that saint had his hermitage, in the midst of what was then the great forest of Nevet; and following the chain of moors called the Black Mountains, with the Ménéhom for its crowning point. And so the whole shore of the bay is a succession of the wildest cliffs and the most perfect sands, the range of each extending generally for a mile or two at a time."

We drove first to the hospitable little inn, where we found a very pleasant gathering of travellers from many nations. Then we strolled through the little town, which has formal, uninteresting houses, and took a path on the right. This led across a field glowing a golden green in the level sunlight, and screened on one side by lofty trees to the edge of the *côte* overlooking the bay itself. Along the edge of this *côte* was a low hedge broken through in many places, and over it clematis and brambles flung long arms down towards the silvèr-looking sand below. The spreading trees near us were almost black against the glowing sky, for the intense blue of the whole bay was gilding into orange and softening into the tenderest green. Warm light glowed on the rock islets of the bay till they changed to purple. A few boys were bathing in one of the lovely little coves far in the distance. Three fishing-boats with brown and tawny-red sails glided over the calm sea, so full of peaceful beauty.

Tristan, the largest of the islands, grew darker every moment. It is so near the town that at low water it can almost be reached dry-footed.

There is a lighthouse on the Île Tristan, and from the top of this the view is magnificent. Far away at the extreme ends of the bay are, on one side the bare white cliffs of the Chèvre, and on the other the dark rugged rocks near the Baie des Trépassés. Between these lie Douarnenez, backed by trees and meadows, Ploaré and other villages, and rising up above, in dark grandeur, is the ridge of the Ménéhom. The colours on this hill were indescribably full of change as the sun sank and gradually disappeared.

The Île Tristan is said to take its name from Sir Tristram Lyonesse of the Round Table; and in a little village close by, to the east of Douarnenez, called Plomarc'h, the foundations of King Marc'h's palace are said to exist. A local tradition fixes on this King of Cornouaille, the husband of Iseulte, a fable resembling that of King Midas. Marc'h is Breton for horse, and the king's barber is said to have told the secret of the King's ears to the sands of the bay. Some time after three reeds sprang from the sand, and being cut and used for pipes they repeated always, "Marc'h, the King of Plomarc'h, has horse's ears."

But the Île Tristan has much local interest as having been the fastness of the brigand chief Guy Eder, who called himself Baron de Fontenelle. He was the youngest son of Robert Eder, Lord of Beaumanoir, and was born in 1572. He ran away from the college he had been placed in at Paris in 1589 to join a band of ruffians, who, under pretext of fighting for the League, plundered and murdered indiscriminately.

Spite of his youth, Guy was soon chosen chief of these bandits, and with them he repaired to Douarnenez. Jacques Guengat had taken possession of the town in the name of the King, but Guy Eder retook it for the League in 1595, and demolished its houses to fortify what had once been a priory in the Île Tristan. For five years Fontenelle held possession of this fortress, even against repeated assaults from the garrison of Brest, from hence he harried and plundered all the surrounding country, and it was to the Isle Tristan that he brought the plunder of the ruined town of Penmarc'h. He seems to have lived here with his band of ruffianly soldiers, and to have pounced like a bird of prey unexpectedly on the neighbouring towns and villages, bringing ruin wherever he came. He escaped punishment at the general amnesty proclaimed by Henry IV. on his accession, but was afterwards arrested and tried for his brutality towards the wife of the governor of Pont Croix. He was condemned to be broken alive on the wheel in 1602.

This Bay of Douarnenez seems to yield every imaginable fish, and the size of the town has greatly increased by the incoming of country-folk to share the profits of its fishery. During the sardine season—that is, between June and December—it is supposed that upwards of four millions of these little fish are taken daily. The fishing and salting of sardines seems to constitute the sole trade of the inhabitants. If the bathing were more accessible Douarnenez would soon become a favourite seaside resort; but fortunately the bathing-place is nearly two miles away from the town, and there is no means of access except on foot, so that, for a time at least, the quiet loveliness of this Eden will be left undisturbed.

There are two churches, neither of them remarkable; but Ploaré is close by, and its church is well worth a visit. The spire is very elegant, older than much of the rest, and the western doorway, like those of St. Nonna and St. Guénolé at Penmarc'h, has carvings of ships and also of fish; the mesgoul, a huge cormorant, is represented pouncing on sardines below. Near Poullan, about four miles from Douarnenez, is the manor-house of Kervénargan, the hospitable home which Cambry designates by the name K., and which, in 1793, sheltered Barbaroux, Pétion, and several others of the proscribed Girondins, when to shelter them was to risk the loss of life and property.

Except in the sardine season it is possible to visit Crozon by boat from Douarnenez, and one enjoys on this journey a delightful view of the coast. But the carriage drive by way of Plonévez or Locronan is also very delightful, though it is a long one of about twenty-five miles. We pass Ploaré and Le Riz. In the villages of Le Riz and of Plomarc'h are the Roman foundation stones said to be relics of the palace of King Marc'h, or Mark, the nephew of Arthur, and the husband of Iseulte. Near this is a rock called Garrec, on which is said to be the mark of a horse-shoe—that of the horse of King Gradlon when he escaped from the drowning of Is.

The road climbs up steeply to reach Plonévez-Porzay, and we make a détour here of about two miles towards the sea, to the celebrated chapel of Ste. Anne la Palue, the scene of the greatest of all the Pardons of Brittany. There are various times through the year when pilgrimage is made specially to this chapel, but on the last Sunday of August and its preceding Saturday is the great spectacle of the year. Monsieur Saläun, the intelligent bookseller of Quimper,

gave us a most vivid account of the procession. He told us it would be worth while to come back from any distance to witness it, and he advised us to stay at Chateaulin, and to make our way over from that town to the festival, as Douarnenez was always overcrowded. The chapel is not remarkable, but the granite statue of St. Anne is said to date from the middle of the sixteenth century.

Looking at the vast and lonely downs on all sides of the chapel, and picturing them covered with the brilliant groups described by M. Saläun, backed by the lovely Bay of Douarnenez, it is easy to conjure up a splendid scene. So great is the concourse of strangers, that more than a hundred tents are often erected for the reception of the pilgrims who cannot find lodging. On the Saturday evening there is a procession of penitents, some only clad in their shirts, some barefooted, to the chapel, where they receive absolution. Through the night many of them may be seen praying around the chapel.

But it is on the Sunday after high mass that the grand procession takes place. From far over the downs the ten thousand pilgrims, in every possible variety of holiday costume—for a priest we met at the table d'hôte at Douarnenez assured us the pilgrims arrive from every part of France—come bareheaded and singing hymns in honour of the saint. Among them the image of the Blessed Virgin is borne by a band of young girls dressed in white. Close behind this comes the statue of St. Anne, borne by matrons in scarlet dresses bordered and fringed with gold. Next come the relics of the saint borne by two deacons in cloth of gold, and after these a large body of richly habited priests; for the Pardon of St. Anne la Palue attracts priests as well as

mere pilgrims, from far as well as from all the neighbouring towns. It must be a sight unique of its kind, for such a ceremony in such a scene is a poem in itself.

Next we come to Ploeven, and after this the road runs along the cliffs. Near St. Nic it is a barren waste with many Druidic stones. The road here ascends considerably. Near Telgruc there is a dolmen. About eight miles farther on is Crozon. There is in the church here a curious representation of the martyrdom of St. Maurice and of the Theban legion. Some of the bones of these martyrs are said to be contained in a large reliquary.

There is so much to be seen at Crozon that one wants some days there to explore the coast. First there are the curious grottoes of the cliffs, near the Anse de Morgat; and a very remarkable road through the rocks, called Begar-Gadoc, said to have been created in miraculous answer to some shipwrecked fisherman who implored the help of St. Marine. There is also a tunnel pierced through the cliff, of which we did not hear the legend. It is called "la Cheminée du Diable." The Grotte de l'Autel must be visited at high tide in a boat; the entrance is very low, but inside the roof becomes lofty, and the grotto is very spacious. In the centre is a flat rock, which the boatmen call the altar.

Beyond Morgat are some stone avenues called "the Lines of Kercolleoch." There is also a tumulus in this region called Tombeau d'Artus.

Following the coast we come to the lofty Pointe de la Chèvre. Here is a grotto called Gués Charivari, the haunt of innumerable sea-birds, which fill the lonely spot with wild harsh cries when some unusual sound breaks the mournful loneliness of the place. There is a remarkable echo here.

The rocks near the Anse de Dinant are most fantastic and rugged. One of them, pierced with two arches, is called Château de Dinant. From here to the Pointe de Toulinguet, just beyond Camaret, the coast has an indescribably wild charm. It is said to be a place of terrible shipwrecks, and indeed the sea breaks against it with overwhelming fury, especially over a line of rocks dotted out into the sea, called the Tas de Pois. Toulinguet has been fortified, and so has Camaret; but one would think the angry sea and the cruel jagged line of rocks were sufficient defence. The view from the point is marvellous, and commands Ouessant and the surrounding islands, as well as the Pointe St. Matthieu and the terrible rocks to the south which we have seen so often. All the men on this coast seem to be fishers, and while the sardine season lasts they are always at work. It is possible to stay at Camaret as well as at Crozon.

We were very sorry to leave Douarnenez and its charming surroundings. It is a place where one could spend many months without exhausting the variety of its scenery or tiring of its beauties; for much that is most interesting in Finistère is within easy reach of the lovely little town. In spring-time, before the sardine fishery and its unpleasant accompaniments begin, Douarnenez must be one of the most enjoyable spots on earth.

It takes rather longer to go to Chateaulin by Locronan than by Plonévez, but it is a much more varied route, and is after all not more than seventeen miles.

The first part of the road takes us by Ploaré to Kerlas, where there is a rather curious church. After this the country becomes hilly, and there is a very steep hill close to Locronan.

The church here is a very remarkable building, nearly all of the fifteenth century; it has three naves. The spire was destroyed by lightning in 1808, and has not been restored. On the south side is the Chapelle du Peniti, built in the sixteenth century by the Duchess of Ferrara, Renée of France, the daughter of Louis XII. and the Duchess Anne. In this chapel is the tomb of St. Ronan, the third counsellor of King Gradlon and a famous saint. His tomb is the shrine of a yearly pilgrimage, but every seventh year there is a wonderful gathering called "la Grande Troménie." This Pardon lasts a whole week, from the second to the third Sunday in July, and it is said there are sometimes as many as 40,000 pilgrims. The tradition is, that when the saint died the three bishops of Vannes, Cornouaille, and Léon disputed the possession of his remains, and at last agreed to place them in a cart drawn by two wild bulls, and to leave the decision to them. The bulls started from the hermitage on the confines of the diocese of Vannes, where the saint died, and found their way to Locronan. Here, having made the circuit of the hill, they stopped at the spot where the tomb of St. Ronan now stands. The pilgrimage is supposed to follow in the miraculous passage of the bulls, and a sermon is preached from the top of the hill by one of the officiating priests.

It would take a long residence in Brittany to witness all the curious traditionary ceremonies woven into the life of its people.

About half-way between Douarnenez and Chateaulin is the chapel of the Kergoat. This is another place of pilgrimage—a large uninteresting building, except that there is some good painted seventeenth century glass in some of

the windows. In the churchyard is a rather picturesque Calvary backed by trees. Soon after this we passed another Calvary near the church of Cast, and very soon after, on the right, the ancient chapel and fountain of St. Pol.

The view of Chateaulin is lovely. It stands beside the river backed by rising ground. Some of this is well wooded, and some of it is broken by masses of rock piled one on another. Green meadows fringed by poplar-trees lie near the river, and give a most picture-like effect to the old grey town with its ruined fragment of castle raised above the rest on one of the hills. Perhaps its aspect is the chief attraction of Chateaulin. It is a quiet quaint little place, very dirty and unsavoury, on the direct railway line between Quimper and Landerneau or Brest; but it is a convenient resting place for a day or two, as there are a few places near it worth visiting.

The ancient chapel of the castle, dedicated to Notre Dame, is older than the date on its portal. There is a curious little bone-house beside it. There was once a famous salmon fishery at Chateaulin. This was destroyed by the making of the canal, but the slate works beside the canal are the chief source of commerce, and give employment to many of the inhabitants.

It is possible to go to Carhaix from Chateaulin, passing on the way the famous Calvary of Pleyben; but we had determined to visit Carhaix from Morlaix, and we therefore missed Pleyben. We were much disappointed to find that the steamboat service between Chateaulin and Brest by Port Launay had ceased. It must have been a most interesting journey down the Chateaulin river into the picturesque roadstead of Brest, where the lovely Elorn river

also joins the sea. However, the railway makes some amends, and we went on from Chateaulin to the next station, Hanvec le Faou. About four miles from this is Le Faou, a picturesque little town built beside a sort of estuary of the roadstead of Brest. The church is quaint, but there is a much older chapel near the bridge. The ruined castle at the entrance of the Quimper road was founded by Morvan, the first Lord of Faou, in the eleventh century.

We wanted to see the church of Rumengol, Notre Dame de toute remède; in Breton *Remed oll*, corrupted into Rumengoll. We found that it was only about a mile and a half from Le Faou, and it is certainly worth a visit. It is a graceful little church of the sixteenth century, with this inscription on the tower: "L'an mil cinq cents trente vi., le xiiii jour de may fust fundée ceste. Guénolé, gouv. H. Inisan, fabriqué fit lors." The interior is sadly gaudy. The fountain is very old, and is said to have miraculous powers of healing. The great interest attached to it is, that the pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Rumengol, one of the most celebrated in Brittany, occurs four times in the year—on Lady Day, Trinity Sunday, 15th of August (the Feast of the Assumption), and the 8th of September (Feast of Nativity of B.V.M.). As the water of the fountain is said to cure all diseases, afflicted beggars flock here in great numbers; they drink the water of the fountain, and bathe their faces, their sightless eyes, and injured, diseased limbs in the healing water. During the day a large and gorgeous procession issues from the church, bearing banners, statues of saints, and their relics. These are placed low enough for the surrounding crowd to touch them as they pass, and

the bearers occasionally cudgel those who are slow in performing this duty. Little children accompany the procession, ringing innumerable little bells.

Souvestre says that the most remarkable part of this pilgrimage is at night, when the church is dark and silent and the musicians have departed. Then the beggars who have not found any lodging cluster together round fires of dried furze on the open ground beyond the churchyard—motley groups of all ages, both male and female, the darting firelight bringing into strong relief their hard faces and picturesque rags. They crouch round the fires till these are blown out by the wind, and then lie down to sleep in the darkness.

I own that I read all Souvestre's descriptions with as much doubt as pleasure, never feeling sure whether they apply to present-day life or to the Brittany of the past; for although probably no European country so near a great centre of civilisation has stood so still, yet the presence of the railway necessitates the presence of a fresh element; already the costumes are much modified, and many old usages are becoming obsolete, as for instance the bridal garments of the Bourg de Batz and the disuse of the Breton language in the government schools. There is also a tendency to embroider facts with Souvestre and some other Breton writers, which makes one hesitate to adopt their statements about anything one has not personally verified.

But there is so large an element of poetry in the aspect of Western Brittany, and also in the hearts of its people, that it often becomes difficult not to be carried away into the borderland that lies beyond stern fact—a borderland

which, if one spoke Breton fluently, one might find to be after all no creation of the fancy. Something mystic and utterly unlike the commonplace of their outward existence seems to gleam out of the long black eyes of these dark silent dwellers on the wild west coast.

Landévennec can also be reached from Chateaulin, and we regretted missing this the oldest abbey in Brittany. Its ruins are at the mouth of the Chateaulin river. Fragan, and Guen his wife, about whom there is a remarkable legend, fugitives from Britain, settled in Cornouaille, and gave birth to Guénolé, who founded this abbey and was its first abbot, but the actual ruins date from the eleventh century only, and were built by the Abbot Breluict. There is a statue in Kersanton stone of St. Corentin, and one also of Jean, last regular Abbot of Landévennec, who died in 1521. In the crypt is the tomb of King Gradlon himself. This part of the country is so full of legends relating to this wonderful monarch, that one gets to regard him as a myth, and it is almost surprising to find that he was an ordinary mortal, actually buried in a Christian church. The position of Landévennec is very picturesque. Near it is a tall rock which, looked at sideways, seems to be a cowled monk with a long beard. This rock is called "le Moine," and is supposed to be a wicked monk of the abbey, petrified for his sins and doomed to remain a rock till the day of judgment.

On the Île Tibidy, in the Faou river, there is a most curious reredos, representing the Annunciation, on the site of the first abode of St. Guénolé. Not far off is the village of Kersanton, which has given its name to the stone used in building the churches in this part of Brittany. The

original Kersanton quarry is exhausted, but near Logonna, and indeed along the whole roadstead of Brest between the rivers of Faou and of Landerneau, are quarries of this stone, dark grey and comparatively soft when first dug, and thus well suited to the elaborate decoration used in the Breton churches, but hardening with exposure and gradually assuming the greenish tinge one sees at Le Folgoët and elsewhere. There are also many quarries of yellow porphyry among the Kersanton stone.

The next station beyond Hanvec le Faou is Daoulas. Here, about a mile from the station, is the remarkable church of the old monastery and its ruined cloister. The choir of the church has perished, but the cloister is a most interesting relic of the twelfth century, perhaps the finest work of this epoch to be found in Brittany. The monastery was founded in the sixth century by the Lord of Faou, in expiation of a double murder committed by him in the assassination of two priests engaged in celebrating mass.

"There was in the country of Cornwall, in the year 510, a generous powerful lord named Arastagan, a great friend of God's servants, who had for nephew a Lord of Faou, just as much their enemy as his uncle was their friend. This Lord of Faou, being informed that all the superiors of monasteries in Cornouaille had assembled near him to confer about their affairs, and that among others were to be found the abbots Tader, Jaoua, and the monk of Landt-tevennec, Judalus, he went to the monastery where this assembly was held, and, having forced the doors, he killed at the altar Tader, who was celebrating mass. His followers murdered all the monks they could find, and he himself cut off the head of

Judalus with one stroke of his sword. Jaoua escaped unhurt, and took refuge with St. Pol, Bishop of Léon, who was his uncle, and with whom he repaired to Faou, where they both, by their saintly exhortations, converted this lord, and delivered him from the evil spirit which had possessed him ever since the murder of the two abbots."

In atonement for his crime they made him found a monastery on the place where the murders had been committed, and in eternal memory of this action called it Monster Daoulaz, the monastery of two murders. Besides its monastery, Daoulas was once a place of much importance. The tradition of its decadence is something like that of Escoublac.

Once upon a time a poor woman, who already had a numerous family, gave birth to seven children at once. The inhabitants of Daoulas were terrified at this prodigy, and, fearing it might be repeated, they hunted the mother and her infants out of the town. The woman took the road to Brest, but before she departed she uttered this prophecy: "Brest shall increase, Daoulas shall decrease; for every house that is built there three shall fall." And from that day Brest has flourished and Daoulas has dwindled away.

The whole coast of the roadstead of Brest is constantly vandyked by estuaries running up into the land, and between Chateaulin and Landerneau this is far more fertile than it is near Camaret and Crozon.

We pass Landerneau on our railroad journey from Chateaulin to Brest. It is a pretty bit of railway, with charming peeps every now and then into the famous roadstead. We cross the *anse* or bay of Kerhuon on a long viaduct. This

bay is the depôt where timber used in the great marine constructions of Brest lies seasoning.

The first arrival at Brest is pleasant. We found ourselves beside the harbour, close to the Cours d'Ajot, a fine avenue, commanding a view over part of the roadstead, and close by the strongly fortified castle of Brest.

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